2bU! / F1

Viva Vigan! Going to a living museum is so much fun

News / A2

Regine: Excusable neglect, I didn't mean to cheat

Sports / A23

Peping Cojuangco wants BAP banned from Philippine Olympic Committee

Motoring / C1

Like shopping for clothes, a lady finds out best repair shop isn't just matter of price

World / A10

Newsweek retracts story that US probers desecrated Koran

Anti-'jueteng' campaign unlucky for winning bettor

MINALAS ANG SWERTE!

By Mei Magsino-Lubis
PDI S. Luzon Bureau

BATANGAS CITY—When Boying (not his real name) heard the news from his father-in-law that his "jueteng" bet had won, he jumped for joy.

ANTI-JUETENG/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Jullie Yap asked to quit as Standard editor in chief

By Alcuin Papa

AFTER seven years as the Manila Standard editor in chief, Jullie Yap Daza has been asked by the newspaper's owner to resign—and she said he gave her no reason why he wanted her to go.

Daza's abrupt departure from the daily came just months after the newspaper merged with

JULLIE/ A6

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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website: www.inq7.net

BIR posts record tax take

Congressmen hurl sounds of fury over jueteng raps

By Philip C. Tubeza

COME out and spill the beans.

Lawmakers yesterday hurled this challenge to a former colleague who told the INQUIRER that House members had received "jueteng" payoffs amounting to P50,000 to P100,000 a month.

Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said that if the former lawmaker wanted to help solve the problem, he should shed his anonymity, substantiate his claims, and expose others who were on the take to spare the entire Congress from public ridicule.

Minority Leader Francis Escudero agreed that the INQUIRER source should not have made a sweeping claim, but added that it was a serious allegation that Congress should thoroughly investigate.

"Maybe there are (congressmen on the take). This is not surprising since it is an open secret," Escudero said.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Riza Hontiveros proposed that an independent commission, not Congress, investigate the jueteng scandal.

An institution under question cannot investigate itself, Hontiveros said. The legislature's hands are stained with jueteng money, she added.

The House committee on games and amusement has invited those listed by the Philippine

JUETENG/ A8

War Against Tax

EDWIN BACASMAS

EVEN THE MAN who rarely has reason to smile, BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno, manages one as President Arroyo commends the agency for a record tax collection under her administration. Ms Arroyo is all smiles as she addresses a command conference at the BIR office.

Budget surplus in April expected

By Michelle V. Remo
and Christine O. Avendaño

THE GOVERNMENT'S financial position appears to be improving, with the Bureau of Internal Revenue reporting a record-high tax collection in April and the National Treasury expecting a rare budget surplus in the same month.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said the tax take reached P62.9 billion in April, the highest monthly collection in the agency's history.

Thanks to a high-profile crackdown on tax evaders, the BIR collection in April was 18.7 percent higher than in the same month in 2004. The April collection was also P200 million above the BIR's target, according to Parayno, who sometimes goes with his staff to check receipts issued by bars and other businesses.

In a separate news briefing, National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the government was expected to post a budget surplus last month and beat its deficit target for the first four months of the year.

"The budget in April this year is leaning toward a surplus," Cruz said, without disclosing figures. A budget surplus in April, if confirmed by official data today,

BIR POSTS/ A9

Boracay 'critical' due to helter-skelter dev't

By Blanche S. Rivera
and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.

VIOLATORS of the building requirements set by the Boracay Master Development Plan are the single biggest factor for the "critical" condition the Philippines' top tourist-draw finds itself in, a regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said yesterday.

Red Paragas, DENR director for Western Visayas, said Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano's worrisome assessment of the condition of Boracay had been observed long ago but had not been addressed.

"We should consider a control system for Boracay," Paragas told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "There should be a study to determine the carrying capacity of the island, if it can still sustain more or if we should limit [the establishments] now."

Karen Reina, president of the Boracay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), said business owners on the island were open to a moratorium on development projects, as Durano announced on Saturday.

But she said the government should first get its act together in addressing Boracay's serious problems. "At the very least, development projects should be regulated until the problems are solved," she told the INQUIRER in Iloilo City by phone.

Reina also said that while the BCCI welcomed the attention of the national govern-

BORACAY/ A9

NOT ENTITLED TO RELIEF

SEC asks court to junk Pacific Plans rehab

By Alcuin Papa

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has asked a Makati court to junk the corporate rehabilitation plan proposed by Pacific Plans Inc., saying the troubled pre-need firm must honor its contract with its plan holders.

In its comment filed in Judge Romeo Barza's court on Monday, the SEC said the judge must "recognize and uphold Pacific's contractual obligation to its existing plan holders at all costs...

"The contracts executed between Pacific and its plan holders must be respected. The plans cannot be unilaterally amended without the consent of the plan holders," the SEC said in its comment, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER.

It added: "The approval of the proposed rehabilitation plan will violate the consensual nature of the contracts. Thus, Pacific's obligations to its existing plan holders must be sustained."

PPI's financial situation has raised fears among its 34,000 plan holders that the company may not be able to fully meet its obligations to pay the tuition of their children this coming school year.

It has also sparked criticism of the supposed weaknesses of an allegedly inadequately regulated pre-need industry.

PPI spokesperson Jeanette Tecson told the INQUIRER the company had yet to receive a copy of the

SEC/ A6

PLACES IN THE SUN
Like summer's golden sentinels, sunflowers with their big round faces glowing like their namesake line University Avenue inside the Diliman campus of the University of the Philippines in Quezon City. A boy reaches out for a flower in the sun. REM ZAMORA

PPI clarifies points raised by PDI series

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer over the weekend ran a three-part special report on the problems besetting Pacific Plans Inc. (PPI) and the pre-need industry.

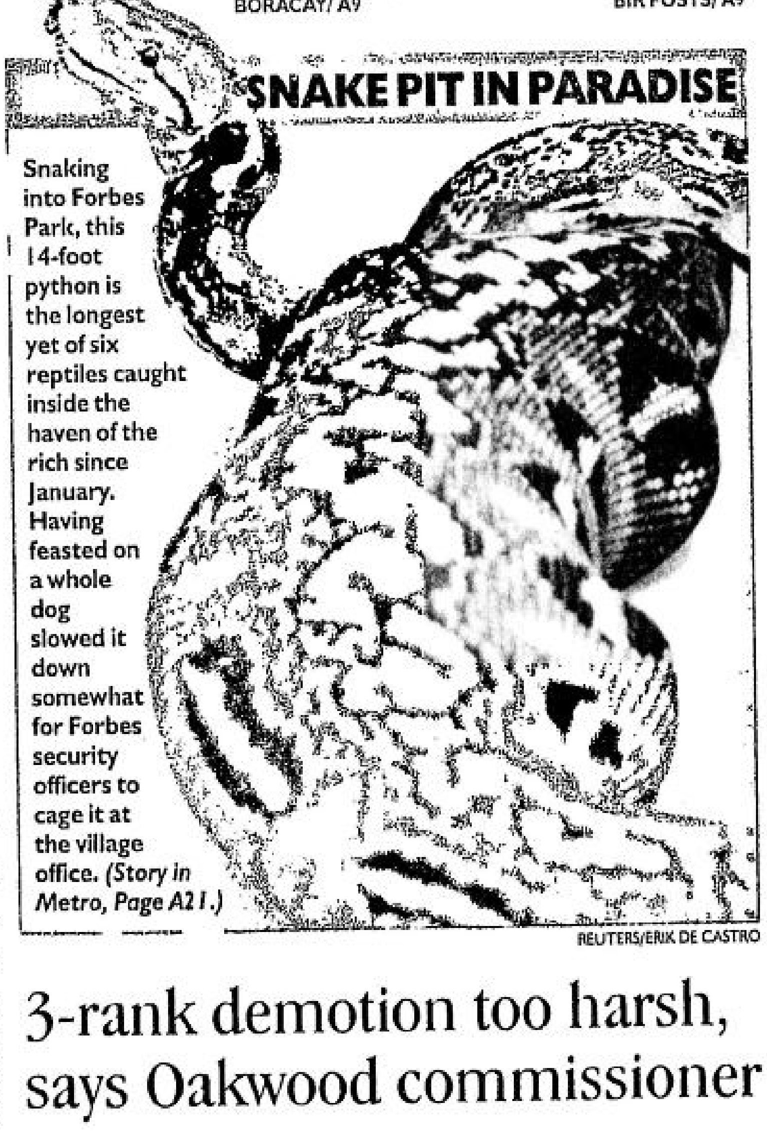
Following is a statement of PPI president Ernesto C. Garcia containing what the company said was "a clarification on the points raised on the company in the May 15 to May 17 three-part series published by the INQUIRER."

- On the allegation "the assets of the company, which should have been used to pay their claims, had been spirited out of the company just before it filed for rehabilitation to hide them from the claims of creditors—the plan holders":

Our reply is that the transfer of assets by way of a spin-off was

PPI/ A6

SNAKE PIT IN PARADISE



Snaking into Forbes Park, this 14-foot python is the longest yet of six reptiles caught inside the haven of the rich since January. Having feasted on a whole dog slowed it down somewhat for Forbes security officers to cage it at the village office. ***(Story in Metro, Page A21.)***

REUTERS/ERIK DE CASTRO

3-rank demotion too harsh, says Oakwood commissioner

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE THREE-RANK demotion imposed by a court martial on 184 mutineers was too severe a penalty for men who were merely following their superiors' orders, according to a member of the fact-finding body that looked into the Oakwood mutiny of July 27, 2003.

Carolina Hernandez, a member of the Feliciano Commission, said the verdict exceeded what had been agreed upon by former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Roy Cimatu, the government's chief negotiator, and the junior officers who led the mutiny at the Oakwood Premier Ayala Center in Makati.

3-RANK/ A7

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CYRIL BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/05/18/05

Second FRONTPAGE

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Mayor summoned on scribe's slay

By Armand N. Nocum

A NEW witness yesterday said he saw the three suspects in the killing of newspaper publisher Philip Agustin heading to and then running away from the scene of the crime, and that an aide of Dingalan, Aurora, Mayor Jaime Ylarde had offered him a job to keep quiet about it.

The Department of Justice, meanwhile, has subpoenaed Ylarde in connection with the killing of Agustin. The preliminary investigation of the case will start on May 27.

Also summoned to the DOJ were alleged gunman Nilo "Boyet" Morete and lookout Manuel Alday, both of whom are still at large.

Yesterday, new witness Roy Canaria, who lives near Agustin's daughter Rosebelle—in whose house the publisher was shot— said he saw the suspects going to and then leaving the area after the killing.

Job at City Hall

Canaria said Buboy Bautista, an adviser to the mayor, later offered him a job as a casual employee at the municipal hall to keep his mouth shut.

"You will put the mayor in a bad light if you tell what you know of the killing," Bautista reportedly told Canaria in Pilipino.

Canaria said that because of the offer, he believed the mayor was behind the killing of Agustin, who had exposed alleged graft in the aftermath of the flash floods and landslides that hit Aurora and Quezon last December.

"I really believe the mayor is involved. That's what scares me. That's why I sought the help of church leaders," said Canaria, who was given refuge in a Dingalan church.

Canaria, who already has a job as a laborer at the town hall, said the three suspects—"Boyet" Morete, his cousin Reynaldo Morete and Alday—worked as bulldozer operators also at the town hall.

Breakthrough

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez ordered Canaria placed in the government's witness protection program.

"He is a breakthrough in the case. He identified the perpetrators," Gonzalez said. "What is established is that all the three (suspects) are employees of city hall."

Earlier yesterday, Ylarde assured a reporter he would make himself available to authorities investigating the May 10 murder of Agustin.

"I will not hide. Never," Ylarde said.

This after a suspect in custody, Reynaldo Morete, had claimed that his cousin "Boyet" had told him that Agustin was killed because of the negative stories he had been writing on the mayor.

Reynaldo, investigators said, tagged Boyet and Alday as the triggermen.

Asked to confirm reports he had been picked up by policemen on Tuesday, Ylarde said: "They don't have to arrest me. I will submit myself if the evidence shows that I ordered the killing."

Not a violent man

The mayor, 57, a former policeman, described himself as "not a violent person."

His service record showed that he resigned from the police force on March 18, 1995, with the rank of Police Officer 3. He then ran for vice mayor that year and won, going on to serve three terms until 2004.

Last year, he ran for mayor under Sen. Edgardo Angara's opposition party and won.

Two sources in Dingalan said policemen, trailed by a television news team, arrived at Ylarde's house in Barangay Poblacion after 9 a.m. on Tuesday. The mayor, interviewed later at 11:30 a.m., denied he had been arrested or held for questioning.

The sources said that at 12:20 p.m., men in fatigue uniforms as well as National Bureau of Investigation agents in three vehicles arrived at Ylarde's house. They were told to wait since the mayor had left for a seminar and would be back later in the afternoon.

Before his death, Agustin, 54, had been writing about Ylarde's alleged misuse of calamity, resettlement and rehabilitation funds intended for the victims of the flash floods and landslides that hit Aurora and Quezon provinces in December 2004. Four typhoons had left 135 people dead, 54 missing, and more than 1,000 families homeless.

Special edition

Starline's May 2-8 special edition, which Agustin had delivered to Dingalan four hours before he was killed, carried stories of alleged corruption and neglect in the aftermath of the calamity.

Senior Supt. Perfecto Palad, police operations chief in Central Luzon and head of Task Force Agustin, said the police were continuing the hunt for Boyet Morete and Alday in Mayantoc, Tarlac, where the two reportedly fled after the killing of Agustin.

Reynaldo Morete had been quoted in newspaper reports (not the INQUIRER) as indirectly linking Ylarde to the murder. *With Luige A. del Puerto and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

I didn't mean to cheat–Regine

By Armand N. Nocum

SINGER-ACTRESS Regine Velasquez yesterday denied she had "willfully" tried to evade the payment of taxes, but admitted she may have erred in declaring her income.

"I did not willfully attempt to evade or defeat taxes and I did not willfully provide incorrect and inaccurate information to the BIR," said Velasquez in her four-page counter-affidavit.

The singer—Regina Encarnacion A. Velasquez in real life—filed her counter-affidavit on charges that she had failed to declare P3.75 million in "income as product endorser of Nestle Philippines Inc." in 2003.

"Since the start of my career in show business, I have been paying my taxes to the government. I have not defrauded ... the government, or anyone for that matter," she said.

According to her, Nestle Philippines had already certified that it had "withheld" taxes amounting to P750,000 from her income.

"Indeed, of the P3,750,000 gross amount, P750,000 was withheld by Nestle for taxes in my favor," she said, adding that this was provided for in her contract with the multinational company.

She said her failure to declare the Nestle income could have been an "excusable neglect" due to her busy schedule.

She said she had left the matter of declaring and filing of income tax to her sister, Deca Pineda, since she was holding a concert in the US at the time. Thus, a "representative" filed her income tax in 2004 in her behalf. "It was physically impossible for me to check the same,." Velasquez said.

"However, such omission or failure on my part could not have been willful for the purpose of evading payment of taxes," she said.

She also cited the fact that not all taxpayers are "quite learned in accounting procedures, the system apparently recognizes a room for inaccuracy. But this inaccuracy does not necessarily and automatically mean that the taxpayer is evading the payment of taxes."

She said there was no "deliberate, intentional wrongdoing on my part as a taxpayer" and that if the records of the deficiencies have been "reconciled," she was willing "to pay whatever is due the government."

Apparently to avoid reporters, Velasquez appeared before the sala of State Prosecutor Rosanne G. Elepano-Balauag at 8 in the morning, or much earlier than the 2 p.m. schedule for her to submit her counter-affidavit.

But her lawyer refused to show her counter-affidavit to reporters, who later got it from DOJ sources.

In April this year, the BIR filed a tax evasion charge against Velasquez.

The BIR said the undeclared amount represents 48.29 percent of the singer's P7.7 million declared income from Viva Television Corp., Maximedia International Inc. and GMA Network Inc. for 2003.

If found guilty, Velasquez faces up to 10 years imprisonment.

Velasquez is also the endorser of the Department of Tourism and Smart Communications' tourism promotion program and as well as KFC, Wendy's, Digitel, Lux, Smart and Nokia.

Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said they are also looking into the records of the other incomes of the singer.

Mike A's libel suit vs Ping junked

A MANILA judge yesterday dismissed the libel cases filed by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo against Sen. Panfilo Lacson over the latter's Jose Pidal exposés.

In a 12-page order, presiding Judge Placido Marquez of the Manila Regional Trial Court, Branch 40, said there was no probable cause in the libel cases filed by Arroyo against Lacson and his spokesperson, Lito Banayo.

Arroyo had sued Lacson and Banayo for allegedly publishing and causing the publication of defamatory remarks against the First Gentleman.

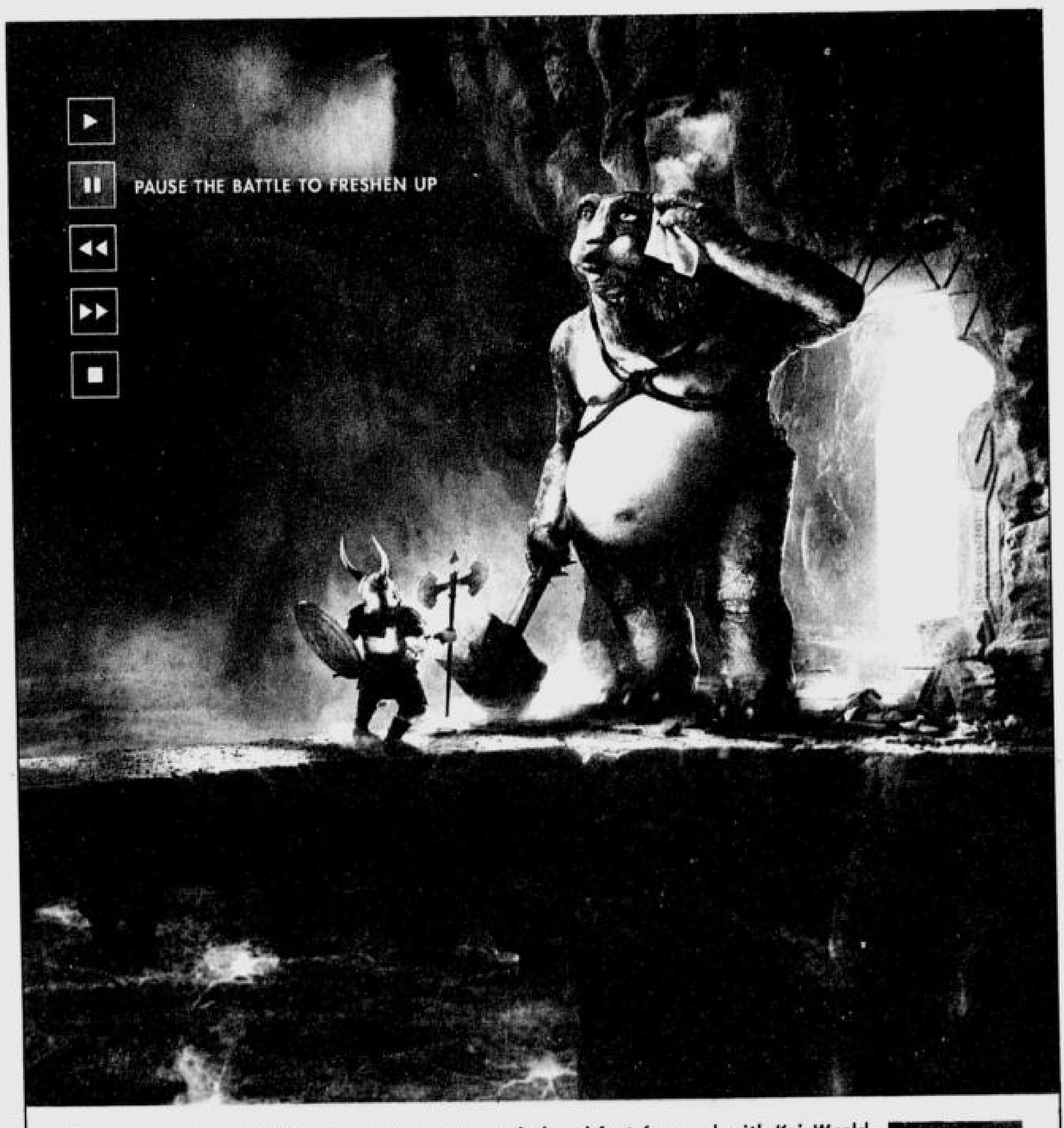
The charges stemmed from Lacson's privilege speech at the Senate in which he accused the First Gentleman of laundering hundreds of millions of pesos in campaign contributions to his wife, President Macapagal-Arroyo, in secret bank accounts using the alias Jose Pidal.

In dismissing the cases, the judge said what Lacson and Banayo did "should be welcomed and applauded instead of being condemned as malicious and defamatory."

"Corruption is all over. Before corruption becomes a part of our culture, let all... who care and who suffer come out, denounce and expose it without vacillation, sacrificing all the truth, including the risk of being charged with libel and being in danger of being arrested," the judge said.

Marquez added that political discussion was a political duty and free discussion rested on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources was essential to the welfare of the public.

"As for the private complainants who may have suffered under a hostile and unjust accusation, their wounds may be assuaged by the balm of a clear conscience," the judge said. Tina G. Santos



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Defensor clears 1st CA hurdle

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER grilling him on his alleged ties with a logging firm and his wife's involvement in a multilevel marketing scheme, the Commission on Appointments committee on environment yesterday endorsed the designation of Environment Secretary Michael Defensor.

Voting unanimously, the committee approved a motion by Rep. Eduardo Veloso to endorse his confirmation to the plenary session scheduled for today.

However, Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, who had reserved to question Defensor but was preempted by the approval of Veloso's motion, vowed to deal with him "later on the floor" and then walked out.

"You feel good being affirmed by your colleagues," an exultant Defensor said after getting the unanimous backing of the CA committee on environment chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon.

The committee dispensed with the opposition filed by Sen. Jamby Madrigal and Catholic Bishops Julio Labayen, Jose Manguiran, Ramon Villena and Deogracias Iñiguez, Bishop Ephraim Fajutagana of the Iglesia Independiente and Fr. Robert Reyes of Gomburza after none of them appeared at the hearing.

The CA Secretariat said it had informed the oppositors about the hearing shortly after they filed their opposition Monday night over what they said Defensor's promotion of mining and illegal logging operations in the country.

Defensor vowed to meet and sit down with his oppositors to discuss their concerns, saying that much of their objections had to do with government policies which he had nothing to do with.

"Many of the issues that have been raised against me were policy issues I have not crafted, and I'm not responsible for. I am responsible for ensuring that we will have responsible mining, and that this responsible mining will contribute to the total economy," he added.

DILG clarifies Reyes remark on media slays

By Norman Bordadora

DON'T get the secretary wrong.

The Department of Interior and Local Government isn't downplaying the killing of journalists in the country, a DILG official said yesterday.

It's just that it's also urgent to solve the killings of members of other sectors as well, Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar said in a telephone interview.

"(Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes) is not belittling the significance of the journalists' killings. What he only meant to say was media should also give importance to the other killings and other crimes being committed," Andanar said.

Andanar said Reyes was attending the wake of a slain religious leader in Leyte when he made the remarks about the killing of media persons. The secretary's pronouncement was made in the context that all killings—be they of journalists, religious or political personalities—should be given importance in the news.

"Secretary Reyes, in expressing concern for newsmen who had been killed or injured in violent attacks, also expressed concern for policemen and soldiers being killed in the line of duty," Andanar said.

Reyes had lamented that a soldier who was killed simply became a statistic, while a slain policeman only had Reyes and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao to visit his wake. *With Luige A. del Puerto*

Pilot dies in Morong plane crash

HE HAD just flown four tourists to Palawan but pilot Filemon Mendoza never made it back to Metro Manila alive.

Mendoza was killed after his single-engine plane crashed in a forest in Morong, Rizal, yesterday afternoon, Rizal provincial police director Leocadio Santiago said.

Mendoza had just ferried two Taiwanese tourists and two Filipinos and was on his way back to Metro Manila.

But about 5:30 p.m., witnesses saw the Cessna plane, with tail number RPC 639, flying unsteadily. A light rain was falling at the time.

Mendoza apparently tried an emergency landing. But his plane crashed in a hilly area in Sitio Agas-as in Barangay San Guillermo at about 6:30 p.m, radio officer PO1 Mark Anthony Caranay said.

The impact was so strong the plane was a total wreck, Santiago said. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

PMA alumni told: Nothing wrong with Bicol road project

By Leila B. Salaverria

THERE was nothing irregular in the awarding of the P952-million contract for phase one of the Cantanduanes Circumferential Road Project contrary to allegations by alumni of the Philippine Military Academy, according to a public works official.

Engineer Norberto Lorenzo, director of the Philippine-Japan Highway Loan Office at the Department of Public Works and Highway, said the project was within the procurement guidelines for foreign-funded projects.

The project in funded by a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Lorenzo said. The contract was signed in September 2004 to improve and rehabilitate the 79.818-kilometer-stretch Catanduanes Circumferential Road.

The PMA '95 Foundation last week asked the Supreme Court to stop and recall a DPWH resolution awarding the multimillion-peso-contract to China Road and Bridge Corp. on grounds that it was overpriced by at least P200 million.

The alumni said the approved budget for contract was P738.7 million against the P993.2 million bid price of China Road and Bridge Corp. The company later adjusted the price to P952.6 million but it was still over the ceiling.

The awarding, the group said, violated section 31 of the Government Procurement Reform Act, which provides that "Bid prices that exceed this ceiling shall be disqualified outright from further participating in the bidding."

One of the authors of the procurement reform act is former Cavite Rep. Plaridel Abaya, who is a member of PMA Class '59. He is also one of the petitioners.

Lorenzo, however, defended the contract, saying there were ceilings on bid prices involving foreign-funded projects.

"The Catanduanes road project is funded by a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation. Under the guidelines for procurement, there is no ceiling for bids on foreign-funded projects," he said in a phone interview.

Lorenzo added that the opinion issued by the Department of Justice opinion in July 2003 stated that projects whose budgets came from foreign sources did not need to have a limit on bid prices.

According to Lorenzo, the DPWH has yet to receive a formal notice about the petition for certiorari and prohibition filed against the Catanduanes project.

Named respondents in the petition were DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, National Treasurer Norma Lasala, and the China Road and Bridge Corp.

GMA orders tuition, MRT fare freeze

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered a freeze on tuition increases of public schools and state universities and the fare rate of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) to show its "sensitivity" to the difficulties of ordinary Filipinos.

This was announced yesterday by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye who appealed for more understanding from the masses on why President Arroyo wants higher taxes to fix the government's fiscal problems.

Bunye said the government would hold off any tuition increases and MRT fare hikes for as long as it could subsidize their continued operations.

The President ordered the tuition freeze following a consultation with the Committee on Higher Education (CHEd). "The immediate objective is to have this out by the opening of classes. We can see that the bias of the President is not to raise tuition and other school fees this school year," Bunye said.

Bunye said the government would also work to ensure that prices of school supplies would be kept down.

The CHEd said it has received petitions for an average 15 percent hike in tuition fees this school year. However, the CHEd said schools would only be allowed to raise tuition fees at par with the current inflation rate and any tuition increase higher than this should be justified by the schools.

On the pending petition of MRT to raise its rates from P10 to P16, Bunye said the President has decided to hold off any fare hike for "as long as the coaches are running and in good state of repair" through subsidies at the rate of P80 million a month.

"We feel that we can still subsidize (MRT's operations) but this decision will have to be reviewed at a certain point in time," Bunye said.

The MRT, which travels through the country's busiest highway Edsa, is seen by the government as an alternative to public utility jeepneys and buses that have been recently allowed to increase their minimum fare by P2.

Bunye said these efforts show the President's "sensitivity" to the plight of the masses.

Gov't bucks Imelda trip

STATE prosecutors yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan not to allow former first lady Imelda Marcos to travel abroad.

Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos said that in her previous travels, Ms Marcos had failed to comply with the conditions set by the court and at times even extended her stay abroad for more than two weeks.

Last week, Ms Marcos, through her lawyer Robert Sison, asked the fourth and fifth divisions of the anti-graft court where she has pending cases, to allow her to travel to China between June 9 and 24 to consult with a certain Dr. Yen, a Shanghai-based doctor of alternative medicine who specializes on knee problems.

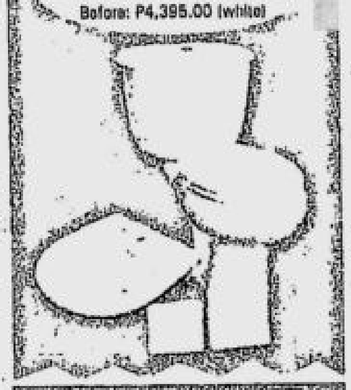
Kallos, however, said there are Filipino doctors who are "more than qualified to conduct or perform the surgery." "The Philippines is fully equipped with the necessary machines for such an operation," he added.

He also said that the recommendation of the London-based doctor of Ms Marcos is nothing but an advice.

"Physiotherapists as suggested by Dr. Sweetnam are available in country," Kallos said.

Kallos noted Dr. Sweetnam's findings that the 74-year-old wife of the late deposed President Ferdinand Marcos being overweight "may be contributory to her knee problem." He further said that medicine is not the answer to her knee problem but only an option."

Sison said Ms Marcos has "no intention" of evading prosecution, pointing out that she has left the country several times and has returned every time, in compliance with the court's order. *Nelson T. Flores*



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Bohol gov hits ex-generals for 'seditious' plot

BOHOL Gov. Erico Aumentado has assailed attempts made by a group of retired military generals led by former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat and a shadowy organization called "Kasama" for enticing local executives to turn against the duly constituted authorities through the establishment of a revolutionary transition government.

In a recent resolution adopted by the Bohol Peace and Order Council, the Boholanos also blasted the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME), another antigovernment group, for fomenting seditious moves against the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a press statement, Aumentado, who is the president of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, described the group's actions as anti-people, anti-Constitution and anti-God.

Aumentado pledged the Boholano's unconditional support behind Ms Arroyo and urged the Filipino people to ignore these sinister calls and remain calm.

"We condemn all destabilization moves to bring down the administration of President Arroyo outside the manner provided by the Constitution," said Aumentado, also the president of the League of Provinces of the Philippines.

He said any extra legal means of toppling the government will only add more difficulty to the people more than effecting the change sought to be achieved.

Earlier, Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas, president of the League of Cities of the Philippines, and Bohol Vice Gov. Julius Herrera, president of the Vice Governors League of the Philippines, also denounced what they called "sinister plots" as part of a destabilization move against the government.

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Courts move too slow vs graft, says HK expert

By Fe Zamora

UNLESS the courts speed up its trial of graft cases, the fight against corruption would never be won, presidential adviser on corruption Tony Kwok said yesterday.

Kwok, a former deputy commissioner of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), said that at an average of seven years per case, the Philippines holds the world record for the longest litigation for graft cases.

"If the courts refuse to change, (and) continue to act as it is at present where you have a case—when you take it before the courts, it will take seven years to be completed—then you'll never have a clean society, never," Kwok told the Makati Business Club regular membership meeting at The Peninsula Manila.

But with an efficient resolution of graft cases backed by strong political will from the leadership, a committed Ombudsman and strong determination to fight corruption coming from all sectors, Kwok said the Philippines could eliminate corruption.

He said Hong Kong was able to lick the corruption problem in three years, using a comprehensive approach which included fast court resolution of graft cases. Kwok said a graft case in Hong Kong was resolved "one year, at the most.

In a past interview, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo admitted the graft court was clogged with cases, including those involving members of the Marcos family who were deposed after a People Power revolt in February 1986.

A People Power revolt would also depose Joseph Estrada in January, 2001, but four years since his ouster, Estrada remains on trial.

Marcelo said some of the cases involved officials who served during the administration of then President Corazon Aquino, who served from 1986 to 1992, and Fidel Ramos, who was president from 1992 to 1998.

Kwok retired from the ICAC in October 2002, ending 27 years of work as investigator and later on chief of operations department of the ICAC.

A frequent Manila visitor, Kwok accepted the post as adviser on corruption to President Macapagal-Arroyo this year.

In 2003, Ms Arroyo invited Kwok to conduct a series of seminars on anti-corruption, and in December of that year, Kwok accepted an invitation to be advisor to the Ombudsman.

Kwok is currently chief advisor of a European Union-Ombudsman Prevention Project. The project has a three-million Euros funding from the EU.

Kwok said that political will, a comprehensive strategy, a professional anti-corruption agency, effective judiciary and partnerships with civil society organization were "key factors" for a successful fight against corruption.

He said even the presence of all the "ingredients of success" were not enough without "strong determination" from all sectors to stamp out corruption.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo has the "political will" and "sincerity" but these were not enough.

"Fighting corruption is not the sole responsibility of the government," Kwok said.

Wigwigan, Igorot bishop, dies; 62

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S lone active Igorot Catholic bishop has passed away.

Most Rev. Cornelio Wigwigan, Vicar Apostolic of Bontoc-Lagawe, died of heart ailment at the Bondoc General Hospital Monday morning. He was 62.

Funeral Mass is set on May 26, 9 a.m., at the Bontoc Cathedral.

Wigwigan replaced Bishop Francisco Claver, the first Igorot bishop in history, when Claver turned 75 on Jan. 20, 2004.Catholic bishops are required to resign on their 75th birthday.

Before his appointment by the late Pope John Paul II, Wigwigan had served as rector of St. Francis Xavier Seminary in Baguio City, director of Catechetics and superintendent of schools in the same city, director of St. Peter Seminary in Bontoc, then vicar general of Bontoc-Lagawe.

He was ordained priest on Dec. 26, 1966.

BLAS OPLE SCHOLARSHIP

The Blas F. Ople Journalism/IT Scholarship Program, to be administered by Samahang Plaridel, a group of veteran media practitioners, will offer beginning this school year scholarships to poor and deserving children of journalists, initially at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila and the AMA University. The program aims to honor the legacy of the former statesman, nationalist and journalist, Blas F. Ople. Photo shows Susan "Toots" Ople, president of the Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute, handing over a check as seed money to the scholarship fund to Rod Reyes, chair of Samahang Plaridel's scholarship committee. Looking on are Samahang Plaridel President Rolando Estabillo (left) and Vice Chairman Neal Cruz (right).

Judge wears bullet-proof vest to court

By Michael F. Sarcauga
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PAGADIAN CITY—Before the court came into session on Monday, bomb-sniffing canines and members of the police and Air Force's explosives and ordnance units combed the judicial building for any sign of danger.

But for Judge Reinerio Ramas of the Regional Trial Court Branch 18, it was not enough.

He wore a bullet-proof vest during the promulgation the other day of a decision on the recount petition by Uray Mamaludin against Mayor Abubakar Nandang Afdal of Labangan town in Zamboanga del sur.

Zamboanga del Sur board member Ernesto Mondarte said Ramas had been receiving threats from unidentified people since handling the election protest, and wearing a bullet-proof vest was an added precaution.

A fire truck and a team of anti-riot police were also on standby to thwart possible violence between supporters to Afdal and Mamaludin.

The other day, amid the tight watch of police and military in and out of the courtroom, Ramas ruled in favor of Mamaludin.

"The true choice of the electorate is protestant Uray Marcaban Mamaludin, having obtained a total votes of 7,759 as against the votes obtained by protestee Abubakar Nandang Afdal [of] 6,689 votes," Ramas said in his decision.

But Afdal said, commenting on Ramas added protection, "I do not have any plan of harming him so his wearing of the bullet-proof vest was an overkill."

"I guess my opponents were trying to picture me as a violent person which is farthest from the truth," he told the INQUIRER.

Afdal himself was not inside the court when Ramas ruled in favor of Mamaludin. He was only represented by lawyer Ferdinand Mas Pablo.

Afdal said he had no plans to disrupt the proceedings and that he would only resort to lawful means to resolve the dispute between him and Mamaludin.

He said as "a law abiding citizen," he believed in the rule of law and that he would contest the decision in the proper venue. "I can always file an appeal to contest the decision," he said.

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Envoy leads UST awardees

RETIRED Ambassador Sergio A. Barrera leads this year's Golden Owl awardees at the reunion and general assembly of the UST Philets Foundation from 10 a.m. on June 4 at Alfredo's on Tomas Morato Street, Quezon City.

Barrera was a magna cum laude A. B. graduate in 1952 and an LL. B. cum laude in 1953. He was cited for the Golden Owl award of distinction in recognition of his long service as chief officer for economic affairs and policy planing of the Department of Foreign Affairs as well as his skillful diplomacy as Philippine ambassador to the premier posts of Brazil, Canada and Italy.

The Golden Owl for Education will be granted to Piedad Guinto Rosales, Class '51, magna cum laude, in recognition of her 40-year career as professor of drama and literature at the UST Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and as associate dean of the new Faculty of Arts and Letters.

Roger Buhay, Litt.B., UST Class '52; M.A., University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, cum laude, will receive the Golden Owl for Education and Religion. He is a Catholic lay minister and a professor emeritus of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of UST.

The Literature award goes this year to Gloria Garchitorena Goloy, Class '50, who produced a critically acclaimed collection of poems, "Adams and Eves and Other Works."

The Golden Owl for Journalism will be granted this year to Doris Trinidad Gamalinda, Class '51, author of essays and poems now collected in five volumes, and the longtime editor-in-chief of the widely circulated Woman's Home Companion.

An institutional award for Principles Leadership goes to Ma. Luisa Zumel Lopez, Class '52, magna cum laude, a board member who has played a big-sister role to the Philets Foundation, which is composed of graduates of the UST Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and the College of Liberal Arts (AB department).

The Golden Owl award for Culture and Arts goes to Tessie Ojeda Luz, Class '52, formerly proprietor-manager of Luz Gallery, and currently a board member of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Another Culture awardee is sculptor, Thybaida Mendoza, Class '51, who is into training and dissemination to improve the clay handicrafts of her home province of Pangasinan.

Balintawak Kiwanis induction set

THE KIWANIS Club of Balintawak will hold its charter presentation and induction of officers on May 27 at 6 p.m. at the Rainforest Windmill, South Triangle, Quezon City.

To be sworn into office are Rene Cremen, president; Edna de la Fuente, first vice president; Pinky Fernandez, second vice president; Elaine Flores, secretary; Mayette Apolto, treasurer, and Mitzi Bustamente, PRO. Directors are Jojo Cantor, Tonton Tugelida, Cyrus Santiago, Mely Vizcarra, Gilbert Magbitang and Dante Sayco.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 18, 2005
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Sir 4:11-19
Gospel: Mark 9:38-40

John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw someone who drove out demons by calling upon your name, and we tried to forbid him because he does not belong to our group." Jesus answered, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in my name can soon after speak evil of me. For whoever is not against us is for us."

Commentary

The disciples don't want to face what Jesus is trying to teach them and they change the subject from the necessity of embracing the poor and the unimportant and tell Jesus that they saw someone doing what they were supposed to be doing (and sometimes can't) but that this person wasn't one of them (not in the 'in' group of chosen ones). They expect Jesus to be as incensed as they are but he startles them again. Jesus says let anyone who can do good in my name, do it. "Whoever is not against us is for us." We are to assume the goodness of people until we learn otherwise! Jesus' words remind us that anyone who does good is close to him, whether they know him, follow him publicly or not. Jesus' goodness and power are not limited to those whom we think should have it or use it! Something to humble us and make us look at all people with hope and amazement.

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IMG INTERNATIONAL MARKETING GROUP **Prudentialife**

PHOTO SHOWS: Prudentialife EVP Bienvenido S. Policarpio, IMG CEO Marketing Director Noel Arandilla, IMG Administrator Emil Gatus, IMG President & CEO Jose Enrique delas Peñas, Prudentialife President Jose Alberto T. Alba, IMG Finance and Accounting Manager Doris Virrey, Prudentialife FVP for Non-Traditional Marketing Aly Reyes and IMG CEO Marketing Director Louis Bartolome Borja.

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- Jose Alberto T. Alba
Prudentialife President

IMG joins forces with Prudentialife

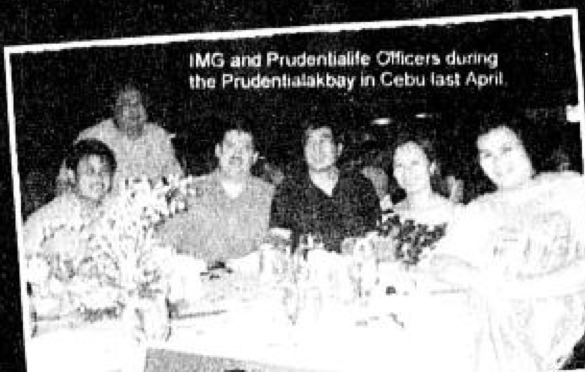
The International Marketing Group (IMG), one of the fastest growing financial marketing companies in the world, has joined forces with Prudentialife Plans, Inc., the number one Filipino pre-need company, to enrich the lives of more Filipino families.

IMG is an independent marketing company supported by some of the largest and most respected companies worldwide. IMG is dedicated to servicing the financial needs of individuals and families by delivering investment products and concepts that now include Prudentialife's pre-need and financial services products.

The IMG system of financial marketing is a tried and tested formula. The demographics indicate that it is in fact flourishing. Not only has it widened the client base of companies that have adopted the system, it also helped generate more income opportunities, a fact that will definitely trigger financial recovery for a country like the Philippines. People who have taken advantage of this new form of financial marketing have gone on to become financially independent and have reached new heights in a career they never thought they would get into.

For 27 years, Prudentialife has nurtured the lives of the Filipino family by offering life, pension and education plans. As a trusted name in the pre-need industry, it has diversified into financial services, memorialization, real estate and travel and leisure. Prudentialife has combined assets of over P27 Billion and 250 branch/area offices nationwide.

The partnership between IMG and Prudentialife is a long-term commitment based on trust and strong foundation. Both organizations have combined their strength to continue delivering high quality products and services to more Filipino families.


IMG and Prudentialife Officers during the Prudentialakbay in Cebu last April.

A glimpse of IMG marketing convention held recently n Cebu.

Prudentialife officers led by Chairman Amb. Francisco A. Alba and President Jose Alberto T. Alba welcome the IMG Team into the Prudentialife *Kapamilya*.

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Jullie Yap asked to quit . . .

From page A1

the Today newspaper, producing the new Manila Standard Today.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER yesterday, Daza said she had a talk with the newspaper's owner, businessman Enrique Razon, and it was then that he asked for her resignation.

She said no reason was given to her.

"Mr. Razon said it was the owner's prerogative to field his own team and that they just wanted changes. And of course, you start with the editor in chief," Daza said.

Joking

"But for what particular reason I was asked to resign, I still don't know. Maybe I was not pretty enough," she joked.

Daza said that Razon told her she was not being fired because, otherwise, she would not be getting her separation pay.

Daza said she responded: "So what do you call this?"

Daza said she had offered to resign a number of times in the past.

Wish come true

"In fairness, I have been wanting to quit several times before. But now, suddenly, my wish has come true. It came so suddenly," said Daza, who sounded relaxed and jovial on the phone.

She added: "This is the first time this has happened. I have now become an unemployment statistic."

Daza said her conversation with Razon was more of "friendly banter. There was no bad blood."

She said Razon offered to retain her as an editorial consultant and a column writer.

"But I said no more, I deserve a rest."

In her farewell meeting with her staff, Daza said that when she was hired as editor in chief, she set her own deadline of two to three years with the newspaper.

Ed's job a headache

"Now I've overstayed. The job of editor in chief is a headache. And there's the strain on my eyes. I am not getting any younger."

Daza dismissed speculation that her exit from the newspaper was a result of a conflict between the employees' union and Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin.

Daza's Manila Standard and Locsin's Today merged a few months ago. Shortly after, the union filed a complaint with the Philippine Press Institute, saying Locsin's dual position as publisher of the merged paper and congressman was a "conflict of interest."

Daza said her first order of the day was "to enjoy myself."

"People have said I look rested and happy. Finally, I am taking a break from the daily deadline," she said.

Daza took the reins of the Standard in May 1998.

An employee of the newspaper, who asked for anonymity, said the resignation of Daza signaled "top to bottom" changes in the Manila Standard Today.

"Now everyone is afraid they might lose their jobs. If they [the owners] could do that to Jullie, they can do it to anyone," the employee said.

SEC asks court to junk Pacific Plans rehab

From page A1

SEC paper but that it was already preparing to submit its reply to Barza's court.

Solvent, liquid

The SEC, which is tasked to regulate the pre-need industry, said in its comment that there was no need for PPI to undergo corporate rehabilitation.

"The present petition was merely resorted to by Pacific to evade its contractual liability to the plan holders," the SEC contended.

"Based on the documents submitted to the SEC by PPI, the latter in compliance with its reportorial obligations is solvent and liquid."

The regulatory body said that based on PPI's financial statement, the pre-need firm exceeded its trust fund liquidity reserve requirement by P3.7 billion. It pointed out that the required liquid assets of PPI should stand only at around P270 million.

The liquidity reserve requirement is set by the SEC and is the portion of a pre-need company's trust fund that is in cash or easily convertible to cash.

'Healthy finances'

The SEC further said that PPI had been declaring stock and cash dividends since 1989 and had paid around P25.7 million to its employees and officers in the form of advances and receivables, all according to its 2002 financial report.

It also disbursed P18.4 million as management service fee to its subsidiary Lifetime Plans Inc. in the last quarter of 2004 and P1.07 billion as commissions and bonuses to its agents and employees for 2003 and 2004, the SEC said in its comment.

"All these audit findings reveal a healthy financial status of Pacific and its deliberate attempt to evade the payment of its contractual obligations by diverting its funds to the payment of dividends to its stockholders to the prejudice of the plan holders," the SEC said.

The claim of PPI that it had liquidity problems could be the result of "poor management foresight or a deliberate attempt to present a poor financial picture in order to evade its contractual obligations," the regulatory body said.

Not entitled to relief

It also contended that PPI "is not entitled to the judicial relief sought considering that it did not come to court with clean hands.

"Pacific immediately filed this petition [for rehabilitation] without first allowing the SEC to institute administrative remedies to ensure the protection of both the corporation and its plan holders," the agency said.

Also, it said, PPI did not disclose to the SEC its supposed liquidity problem.

"The SEC has adequate mechanisms to assist Pacific if indeed it is experiencing liquidity problems without undermining the plan holders' interest," the agency said.

The spin-off of PPI's assets and liabilities to Lifetime Plans and other related companies "is a fraudulent scheme to keep its assets away from the reach of traditional plan holders," the SEC alleged.

PPI denies fraud

Tecson denied the allegation in a talk with the INQUIRER.

"We maintain there is no fraud in the spin-off and it was meant to safeguard the interest of 400,000 plan holders of our other products," the PPI spokesperson said.

In its comment, the SEC dismissed PPI's contention that the deregulation of tuition and the Asian financial crisis had caused its liquidity problems.

The regulatory agency noted that PPI had stopped selling its traditional education plans in 1992, a full 10 years before the SEC suspended the sale of traditional plans industry-wide.

"Plainly, those years gave Pacific sufficient opportunity to cushion itself from the risks of selling traditional plans to formulate and implement business strategies that can satisfactorily address those risks."

Finally, the SEC said any change in the contract between plan holders and the company "cannot be forced upon the plan holders without their consent."

First hearing

Judge Barza has scheduled a first hearing of the case on May 25.

In April, PPI filed for rehabilitation in Barza's court, saying it could no longer pay its plan holders. PPI offered to return their money in 2010 with 7 percent interest.

Barza had ordered the company to stop making any payments. But he allowed PPI to shell out P341 million as "tuition fee support" for availing plan holders.

The PPI plan holders include overseas workers, businessmen, lawyers, office clerks, government employees, journalists, accountants and teachers.

In interviews carried by the INQUIRER in a special report, the plan holders said the money they put into the education plan sold by PPI came from hard-earned savings intended to give their children the best possible education.

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OUTRAGED Pacific plan holders, parents and children gather at St. Paul's College in Pasig to question the firm's claim that Pacific Plans does not have sufficient funds to pay their tuition. JOAN BONDOC

PPI clarifies points raised by PDI series

From page A1

done with the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which was furnished a copy of the audited financial statements showing the segregation of assets.

The trust fund, which is the major asset, is separate for each line of business. Other assets and liabilities are easily identifiable by their lines of business.

Protecting the plan holders

- The spin-off was undertaken as an ordinary corporate restructuring mechanism. It was intended to protect, as fairly and as equitably as possible, the interest of the various parties involved, including the 400,000 holders of other types of plans.
- SEC Secretary Gerard Lukban was even quoted in the same three-part series, "we saw that the spin-off (of assets) was for the protection of the plan holders and it did not violate any rules. We saw that it was a fair segregation based on the ratio of contributions."

Accra denial

- On the subject of PPI approaching Accra law office asking to evaluate PPI's rehabilitation plan, please note that in the letter to the INQUIRER dated May 17, 2005 which was furnished PPI, Accra denied issuing such an opinion.
- We also wish to state that the counsel for PPI is Atty. Jeanette C. Tecson.
- It was also said in the report, "they cut up the assets of PPI and distributed them to other companies so creditors and plan holders will not be able to claim them."

By diligent process

We underscore that the assets and liabilities transferred pertained to the lines of business transferred. Any income reported from the trust fund can only be used to pay for benefits under each plan.

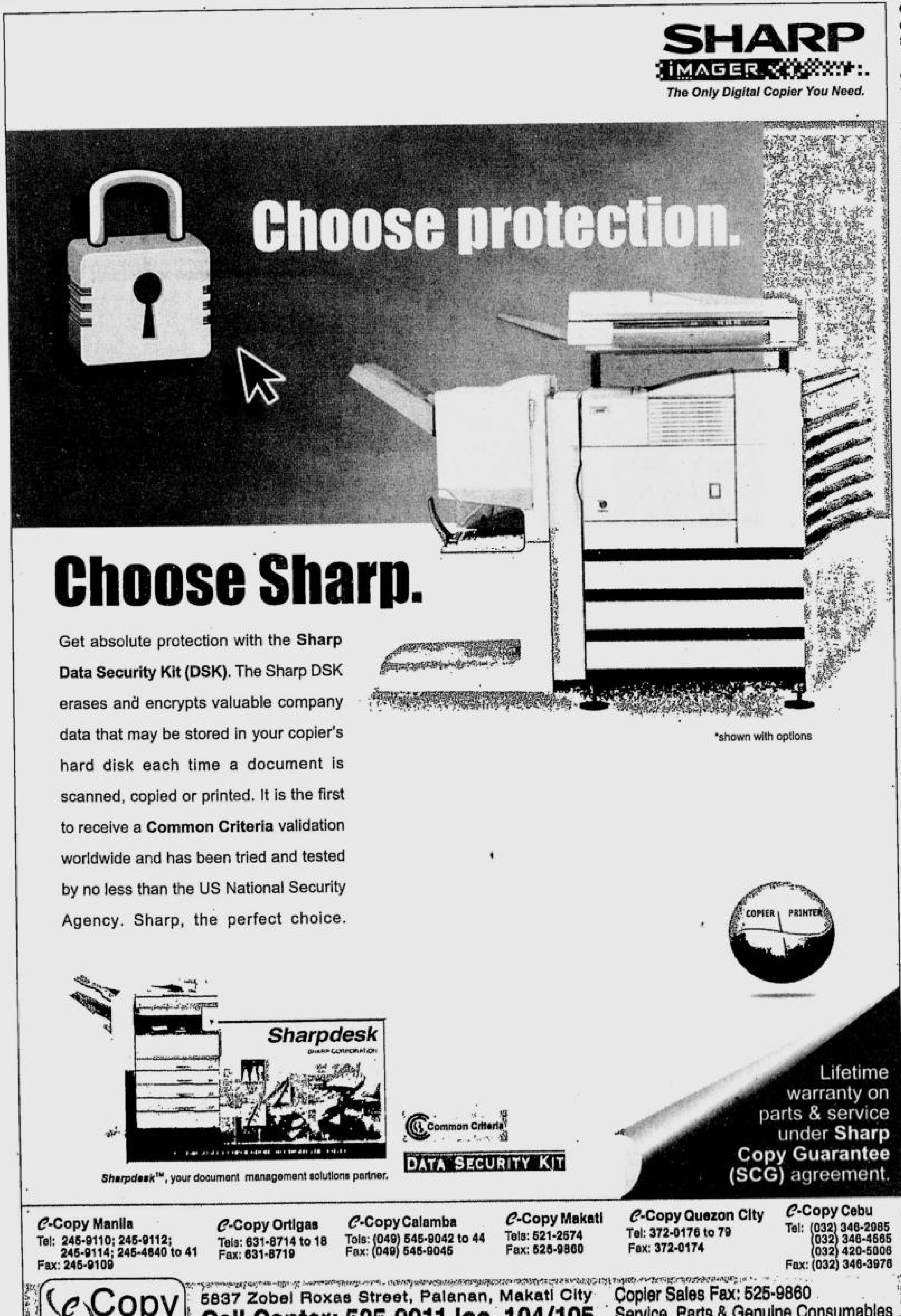
- On the allegation, "according to estimates in the industry, PPI's undisclosed trust fund shortfall was between P6 billion and P8 billion."

We wish to point out that the process of actuarial reserve valuation is arrived at by a diligent process under the supervision of licensed actuaries and submitted to the SEC for review and approval. This, PPI has done.

- There was also a question, "where will they get the money to pay for their children's tuition in the coming school year? They cannot wait for 2010."

We want to stress that from PPI's P341 million and the P250 million advanced by Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco, or a total of 591 million, PPI would have effectively reimbursed the full tuition for this school year's opening.

For those who cannot wait till 2010, PPI will provide a liquidity window of initially P300 million, upon approval by the court of the rehabilitation plan, from which the plan holders can encash the fixed value plan, if they wish to do so.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3-rank demotion too harsh, says Oakwood commissioner

THAT was then when a rebel soldier dared take over the Oakwood luxury apartments in the heart of Makati. PDI PHOTO

From page A1

Speaking on the sidelines of a maritime symposium at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday, Hernandez pointed out that under the terms of surrender to end the 22-hour standoff, the enlisted men would be spared.

She said the junior officers, who called themselves the Magdalo Group, had told Cimatu they would take the brunt of any punishment.

Cimatu agreement

The enlisted men entered into a plea bargain with military prosecutors last week. The main charge of mutiny was dropped in exchange for their pleading guilty to three charges of disrespect and insubordination.

The military court presided over by Col. Jose Recuenco ordered their demotion by three ranks and the forfeiture of two-thirds of the basic salary for three to six months.

It also gave due consideration to their detention for the last year and 10 months and ordered their immediate release.

Hernandez said that "from the point of view of the Feliciano Commission," the plea bargain was "a good idea."

But she pointed out that the court-imposed penalty even called for demotion when "the agreement with Ambassador Cimatu [was that] they will be processed according to the Articles of War, and the penalty will be lighter."

"So it's Cimatu-plus," said Hernandez, who had been appointed presidential adviser on the Feliciano Commission's recommendations for military reforms.

Welcome development

The enlisted men are still waiting for AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu to approve their release.

"From where I stand it's a welcome development [because] they have been in jail for quite a time," Hernandez said.

"The outcome respects the rule of law and due process, and involves the idea that those who committed a crime will be punished—and they have been so punished," she added.

But a similar plea bargain by the junior officers, while allowed by law, was a different matter, Hernandez said.

She said what was important was the rule of law was enforced.

"What I can say is that it is probably one of the important components for deterring future coup attempts," she said. "But it is not the only one."

Hernandez said the Feliciano Commission had also recommended different treatment for the soldiers and for the junior officers.

Different treatment

Sixty-seven of the 95 junior officers behind the Oakwood mutiny had also sought a plea bargain, but military prosecutors have so far been cool to the idea.

The 25 so-called core leaders, however, have not sought a plea bargain.

The 1990 Davide Commission had also recommended that senior officers who led the coup attempts against the Aquino administration were to be dealt with "severely" and the junior officers lightly, Hernandez pointed out.

"This is reflected in principle in the outcome of the plea bargain of the [enlisted men]," she said.

No comment

She refused to comment when asked what she thought was an appropriate punishment for the Magdalo leaders.

FELICIANO COMMISSION member Carolina Hernandez: Verdict exceeds agreement with chief negotiator Roy Cimatu.

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Bishop warns of 'public disorder' if he or Isabela gov are harmed

By Christian V. Esguerra

ARCHBISHOP OSCAR CRUZ: His allegations confirmed by congressman who asked not to be named.

ARCHBISHOP Oscar Cruz of Lingayen-Dagupan yesterday warned of a possible "public disorder" if he or fellow crusader against "jueteng," Isabela Gov. Maria Gracia Padaca, were harmed.

"If something happens to me or Padaca, it might trigger some public disorder regardless of whoever perpetrates the crime or even if it's just an accident," he told reporters in Manila.

Cruz was reacting to Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos' warning that "professional assassins" had been tapped by gambling lords to silence him and the outspoken governor.

On Friday, Padaca outraged her own mayors when she accused them of not cooperating in her campaign to turn Isabela into a "showcase" province where jueteng no longer thrived.

Cruz, who has been receiving death threats since he went public against the illegal numbers game, said the public would naturally blame jueteng operators and their coddlers in government for anything that might happen to him or the governor.

Earlier, he alleged that jueteng operations were more widespread now than during the Estrada administration. He furnished the House of Representatives a list of 15 gambling lords allegedly remitting to a top police official as much as P19.6 million monthly in jueteng collections from 24 provinces.

Cruz said he "felt bad" that someone would try to kill a 70-year-old priest and a disabled governor who were simply raising the alarm over the worsening problem of illegal gambling. Padaca is a polio victim.

"We are two individuals who are helpless," he said. "We have nothing to protect ourselves with."

Cruz said he had been receiving even more death threats since he appeared before a congressional inquiry and submitted his list. Still, he declined Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao's offer of a security detail.

Senior Supt. Napoleon Estilles, Isabela police director, had asked Padaca to increase the number of her security aides amid the threats to her life.

"I will ask for security ... if the situation warrants," said Padaca, who already has six police escorts.

She said she last augmented her security force in November last year when police received intelligence reports that her life was in danger due to supposed threats from her political rivals. *With reports from Villamor Visaya Jr. and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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MR. CLEAN, Tony Kwok, chief adviser of the Anti-Corruption Office of the President, was a guest at the Makati Business Club forum and general membership meeting at the Peninsula Hotel on Tuesday. He's welcomed by Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and Ricardo Romulo. RUDY ESPERAS

Congressmen hurl sounds of fury over jueteng raps

From page A1

National Police as suspected jueteng lords to attend its hearing on May 23.

Nograles said the INQUIRER source, a former congressman from Metro Manila, should not be concerned about his safety since the law gives protection and immunity from prosecution to persons who testify against jueteng operators.

Confessions, bishop's charges

"What is he afraid of? *Magpakalalaki siya* (He should act like a man). He should have the balls to come out and prove his allegations," an angry Nograles told reporters.

"There are 236 congressmen and certainly not everybody is on the take, if there are any," he added.

The former lawmaker alleged that the payroll of jueteng lords included not only police officials, governors and mayors but also lawmakers. He said he and some of his colleagues in Luzon and Metro Manila had received payoffs from financiers of the illegal numbers game in the 1990s.

The payoffs were meant to shield the gambling lord from congressional inquiries "in aid of legislation," he said.

The source said he was confirming the exposé of Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz that the jueteng racket that brought down the Estrada administration in 2001 had grown bigger under the present administration.

Solo act?

"From his confession alone, it appears that he was acting all by himself. What I can't understand is why he is dragging the name and reputation of the entire Congress," Nograles said in a statement issued earlier in the day.

"He should name the solons linked to jueteng. He should not damage the reputation of the entire Congress," he added.

Nograles said that since the source claimed to have "personal knowledge" about lawmakers taking bribes, his testimony could be used in court to convict other congressmen.

"He claims they talked about it in clubs and that he saw the crisp bills. If everything that he is saying is true, he should come forward and testify in court based on personal knowledge," he said.

No ethics probe

Bohol Rep. Roberto Cajes, chair of the House ethics committee, said his group could not conduct an investigation without a formal complaint.

"The committee can conduct an investigation only if there is a sworn complaint or an endorsement from the House, or a referral from the committee on rules," Cajes said.

He added that it could not also investigate crimes committed during past congresses unless the lawmaker responsible was a member of the present 13th Congress.

Hontiveros suggested that an independent commission composed of prominent personalities from civil society, the judiciary and even the media, investigate the scandal.

Credibility crisis

"In a situation in which there is a crisis of credibility on the part of government institutions from the presiden(cy) down to Congress, any mock investigation will be unacceptable to the people," the party-list legislator said.

She said accusations that past and present House members received jueteng payoffs were "serious" and should be addressed thoroughly and carefully by the House leadership.

While Representatives Joel Mayo Almario (Lakas, Davao Oriental), chair of the House committee on games and amusement, and Douglas Cagas (NPC, Davao del Sur), vice chair of the committee on good government, urged the INQUIRER source to identify the erring lawmakers, Hontiveros said it would be prudent for the House of Representatives to "cleanse its own ranks."

The least that the House could do would be to allow the ethics committee to come up with a clear stand on those who would be later found by the independent commission to be receiving jueteng payoffs.

Senate inquiry

A Senate inquiry into the operations of the illegal numbers racket will be handled jointly by Senators Manuel "Lito" Lapid, chair of the Senate committee on games, amusement and sports, and Manuel "Manny" Villar.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had demanded Lapid's ouster from the probe for possible conflict of interest. He said Lapid might even be linked to the proliferation of jueteng in Pampanga, which Pimentel had dubbed the "Vatican of jueteng," since he [Lapid] served as its governor.

Pimentel said Lapid had already shown partiality when he cleared Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, the Pampanga-based alleged big-time jueteng lord.

Lapid vehemently refused to inhibit himself, saying it was the only committee chairmanship he held in the Senate.

To solve the problem, Senate President Franklin Drilon proposed a joint hearing by Lapid's and Villar's committees as a "good compromise."

"Nobody gets hurt, nobody is embarrassed. Nobody will be protected," Drilon said yesterday. *With reports from Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Anti-'jueteng' campaign unlucky for winning bettor

From page A1

His bet of P200 won for Boying P160,000. But this farmer can't collect.

And he blames the media.

Media blamed

According to Boying, the jueteng operator in Ibaan town, known only by his alias, Boy Villanueva, refused to hand over his prize money. He reportedly blamed the media for the jueteng exposés and the resulting police crackdown on jueteng lords and operators, which prompted operations to go slow. With the slowdown, money became a problem.

Because of M1, M2, JS7

"Who is M1, M2 and JS7? How come the jueteng collection waned because of them? And why is it that even the Senate is also meddling in jueteng? They're the reasons why I didn't get my prize," Boying lamented.

Late last month, a military source had told the INQUIRER that M1, M2 and JS7, who were described as being close to a top government official, were the biggest jueteng beneficiaries.

The Senate is set to probe the allegations of Archbishop Oscar Cruz that jueteng was bigger today than during the Estrada administration and that some local officials were jueteng lords with a huge portion of their take going into the pockets of certain national officials.

Boying, a resident of Lipa City, placed his bet with his father-in-law, who's a jueteng collector.

He had visited his father-in-law the day before in Barangay Mahabang Parang of this town and placed his bet on the winning number.

Can't report to police

"*Tumaya ako sa paborito kong numero nang tumbok na P200. Sa Ibaan daw ang bolahan nu'n. Kinabukasan, nang malaman kong nanalo ako, ang saya-saya ko kasi 'yung P200 ko naging P160,000 agad* (I placed P200 on my favorite number. The draw was to be held in Ibaan town. When I realized the next day that I won, I was so happy because my P200 became P160,000)," Boying said.

"It's like the money turned into stone. I don't know what to do now. I can't complain to the police because they might put me in jail," Boying rued.

For now, he is still hopeful and will wait until jueteng resumes operations full-blast when the heat against the illegal numbers game cools off.

Learning a lesson

"I hope my waiting won't turn to waste. That's big money and a big help to my family," Boying said.

Asked if he would still play the numbers game, he said he had learned his lesson.

After he gets his money, he won't place any jueteng bet ever again.

Wanna bet?

BIR posts record tax take of P63B in April

From page A1

would be the first in four years.

At a command conference held at the BIR main office in Quezon City, a visibly elated President Macapagal-Arroyo congratulated the agency's officials and employees.

"This is one of the highest growth rates we've seen so far . . . a source of great optimism," said Ms Arroyo, whose administration last enjoyed a monthly budget surplus in April 2001.

Analyst's restrained reaction

Analysts, who had criticized Ms Arroyo's pace of fiscal reforms as too slow, were restrained in their reaction to the government's glowing reports of a record tax take and unusual budget surplus.

"I don't think it will be a very big surplus, indicating some control in expenditures besides higher revenues in April," Reuters quoted David Cohen, director for economic forecasting at Action Economics in Singapore, as saying.

"It's still early days. If they can demonstrate success in running after tax cheats, the country will be rewarded in the financial markets in terms of lower costs of borrowing," Cohen said.

"We may not be looking at sustained surpluses for the rest of the year, but there is room for the government to continue to improve the budgetary position," said Song Seng Wun, regional economist at GK Goh Securities in Singapore.

"It's good to collect taxes, but then government machinery has to spend more to improve its image. They have to make sure the Philippines stays on the radar screens of investors," he added.

SWEPT AWAY. President Arroyo offers a view of Taal Lake as seen from the viewing deck of the Taal Vista Lodge as she thanks the organizers of the 10th Living Lakes Conference in Tagaytay City on Tuesday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

A possible upgrade

Even so, Cruz said an upgrade of the country's credit rating was in the offing.

"If we continue this effort and the spending program, then it can only be positive, so I suppose that's a candidate for review of the rating. But it's up to the agencies," he said.

Rampant tax evasion, inefficient revenue collection and a narrow tax base in the country prompted international ratings agencies to downgrade Philippines foreign debt to as low as four notches below investment grade earlier this year. That raised borrowing costs for the government, which spends a third of its budget to repay debt.

The Philippines, Asia's most active issuer of sovereign debt after Japan, has one of the lowest tax collection rates in the region at about 12.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and has run budget deficits in 11 of the last 15 years.

Ms Arroyo is pushing a package of fiscal reforms aimed at generating an extra P80 billion in revenues each year. Congress has passed three of the bills.

The first of these measures raised "sin taxes" on alcohol and tobacco, the second was a carrot-and-stick mechanism to improve efficiency at the BIR and Bureau of Customs, and the third expanded the value-added tax on most goods and services.

The government expects this year's budget deficit to fall to P180 billion, or 3.4 percent of GDP, from P187 billion, or 3.9 percent of GDP, in 2004.

Upward trend

Last month's record collection followed the record one-day collection of P21.4 billion on April 15, the deadline for the filing of tax returns for the previous year.

Presenting figures at the command conference, Parayno indicated that tax collections were on the uptrend.

In the first four months of this year, for instance, the BIR collected P172.6 billion, up 13.6 percent from the same period a year earlier but slightly off its target of P173.86 billion.

From 1998 to 2002, BIR's collection grew by only an average of 4.5 percent annually. In subsequent years, however, the growth rate progressively increased to 7.97 percent in 2003 and 10.3 percent in 2004. It is now running at 13.6 percent.

Parayno said the BIR would step up its collection efforts by continually reforming tax administration and cracking down on tax cheats.

Scheme vs tax cheats

The BIR and Department of Finance kicked off a scheme against tax cheats in March by filing criminal complaints against two health and fitness celebrities. The BIR has since filed tax evasion charges against a popular actor, a singer and a basketball star.

"Tax evaders will be caught and punished even as tax compliance for honest taxpayers will be facilitated and made easy," Parayno said.

He said the new BIR policy represented "a marked departure from just allowing the assessment to be compromised, a practice that encouraged people to commit tax evasion first and then wheedle a compromise when caught."

Parayno said the "distorted" policy, which was stopped in 2004, "created a huge population of tax offenders."

With a report from Reuters

Boracay 'critical' due to helter-skelter development

From page A1

ment, "it is sad that the problems had to come to this point before they are given the proper attention."

"For the last 15 years, we have been saying that things should be put in order before the construction frenzy happened," she said. "Before, it was as if we were crying wolf ... as if we were being alarmist, when we raised concerns about these problems."

Reina said Boracay had been excessively promoted but the necessary infrastructure and other support services were not put in place to meet the influx of tourists.

"It's now bursting at the seams," she said.

Construction permits

Durano had said that Boracay's world-famous waters and white sands would soon be lost unless the problems of overpopulation, garbage disposal and proper construction were addressed.

He made the statement on Saturday at the first meeting of the Boracay Eminent Persons Group (EPG), a council of advisers to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The local government is said to have continued to issue construction permits even if some structures did not comply with the requirements of the Boracay development plan.

Paragas said it was necessary to check whether the island could still sustain the water requirements and other demands that come with the tourists, especially during the peak summer season.

Department of Tourism records showed that 428,755 tourists came to Boracay last year—up 26 percent from 2003. More than half were locals.

Paragas said Environment Secretary Michael Defensor had ordered a review of the Boracay development plan and its compliance.

He said, however, that the DENR and the local government had not yet determined what to do with establishments violating the building requirements.

The DENR is set to close down next month establishments that do not have proper waste disposal facilities, he said.

Land titles

Two members of the EPG have expressed disagreement with the priority given by the DENR and DOT to issuing individual land titles to resort owners in Boracay.

"The titling can be done later on," said Iñigo Zobel, one of the four whom Ms Arroyo named to the council of advisers on April 15.

Zobel said there were more urgent issues to address in order to save Boracay from destruction: a moratorium on further development; implementation of a zoning plan; requiring all establishments to tap into the sewerage system, and a proper garbage disposable facility.

"I think those are the priorities. I don't know about the others," Zobel said at the EPG meeting in Boracay.

Juan Elizalde, representing his father Fred Elizalde, who was also named to the EPG, agreed with Zobel.

Both men said that a number of business establishments did not have proper sewerage systems, and that despite an ordinance on garbage segregation, assorted trash were thrown together into an open dump close to a cliff.

The DENR and DOT are bent on issuing lot titles to private individuals as a means of restoring order on Boracay.

By law, however, the entire island is a public domain and, therefore, cannot be privately owned.

Durano had said that there would be a moratorium on further development.

He said that the DENR and DOT were "aware" of the problems, and that the titling process was their way "to recover the island."

"It's our only window of opportunity. Otherwise, it will be too late to control," he said.

Durano said the DENR has nearly finished its cadastral survey of the island.

"If you want a title, we'll set conditions. The titling and the zoning are part of the clearing process," he said.

But the criteria for who gets a coveted title have yet to be drawn up, he said.

Assigning the blame

Lara Salaver, president of Boracay Foundation Inc., said her group agreed that Boracay was in a critical state although the private sector had been doing its share in addressing the problems based on its resources.

"But it seems they always put the blame on us and the local government. What has the national government done?" she said in a phone interview.

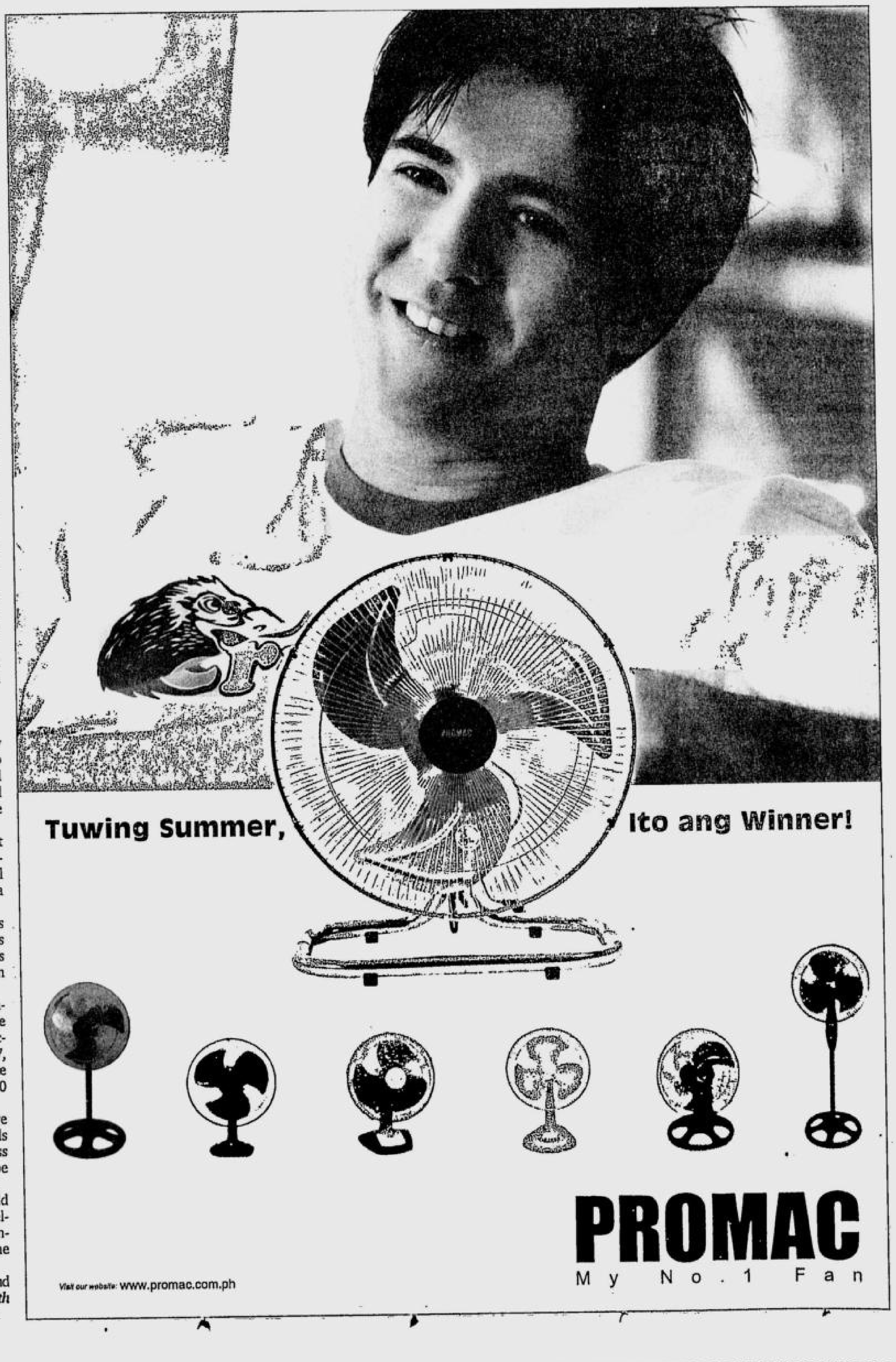
According to Salaver, no roads have been built after the access road was constructed in 1991. This has contributed to the congestion of areas near the beach, she said.

Salaver said a solid waste management system, a component of the Boracay Environmental Infrastructure Project that was started in 1997, had not been implemented despite the rise in the project cost from P400 million to around P600 million.

She said Boracay needs more schools and centers to train locals for employment in the business establishments so there would be no need to hire outside workers.

She also said her group would agree to a moratorium on development projects if the government had a clear plan and the budget to implement it.

"Otherwise, the whole island would be left hanging," she said. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*



The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Newsweek retracts story on Koran abuse

WASHINGTON—Newsweek magazine on Monday retracted a report that US interrogators at Guantanamo Bay had desecrated the Koran after the story triggered protests in Afghanistan that killed 16 people and the White House criticized it.

"Based on what we know now, we are retracting our original story that an internal military investigation had uncovered Koran abuse at Guantanamo Bay," Newsweek Editor Mark Whitaker said in a statement, a day after apologizing for the report.

The retraction came as the White House, the Pentagon and the state department all heavily criticized the report and said it had damaged the US image abroad. White House spokes-person Scott McClellan had said it was "puzzling" that News-week had not retracted the story a day after apologizing for it.

"A retraction is a good first step," McClellan said after Newsweek issued its statement. "This allegation was unsubstantiated and it was contrary to everything that we value and all that our military works to uphold. We encourage Newsweek to now work diligently to help undo what damage can be undone."

"People lost their lives. The image of the United States abroad has been damaged. It will take work to undo what can be undone," McClellan said.

The Pentagon said earlier an investigation remained open into allegations contained in Newsweek's May 9 report.

The report sparked violent protests across the Muslim world—from Afghanistan, where 16 were killed and more than 100 injured, to Pakistan, Indonesia and Gaza. In the past week the reported desecration was condemned in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Malaysia and by the Arab League.

State department spokesperson Richard Boucher said it was appalling that "an article that was unfounded to begin with has caused so much harm, including loss of life."

The US image had already been tarnished in many parts of the Arab world, and Washington has labored to rebuild trust among Muslims following last year's disclosures that US guards at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison physically and sexually abused Iraqi prisoners.

A senior US administration official said embassy posts would be instructed to disseminate the Newsweek retraction and try to convince Muslims that it is authentic and the original story was wrong.

Muslims in Afghanistan were skeptical about the turnaround on Monday.

"We will not be deceived by this," Islamic cleric Mullah Sadullah Abu Aman said. "It comes because of American pressure." Aman was the leader of a group of clerics who vowed to call for a holy war against the United States.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, a close US ally, said the report had caused a public outcry that enabled enemies to orchestrate violence. He was displeased with the magazine's acknowledgment of error, his spokesperson said. *Reuters*

US soldier in prison abuse found guilty

WASHINGTON—A US military policewoman behind some of the most ghastly photographs from Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison was found guilty late Monday of severely abusing inmates and failing to carry out her army duties, a spokesperson for the military said.

Specialist Sabrina Harman was convicted on six out of seven counts against her, including charges of maltreatment of detainees, conspiracy to maltreat detainees and dereliction of duty.

A military jury of four officers and four enlisted servicemen seated in Fort Hood, Texas, however, acquitted her on one maltreatment charge.

"The substance of it is that based on the verdict, the maximum sentence that could be judged against her would be five and a half years versus the six and an half years, had she been shown guilty on all the specifications," base spokesperson James Wittmeyer said in a brief telephone interview.

A former pizza parlor manager from outside the US capital, 27-year-old Harman is credited with engineering one of the most famous pictures from Abu Ghraib that showed a hooded inmate in rags standing on a box with electrical wires attached to his hands. *AFP*

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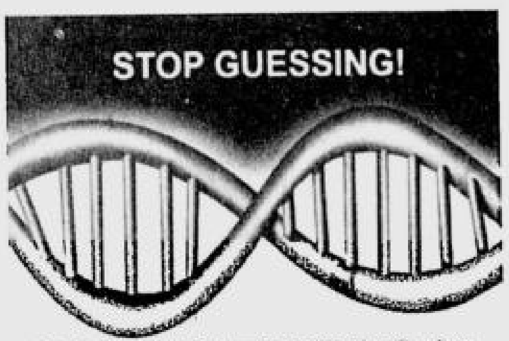

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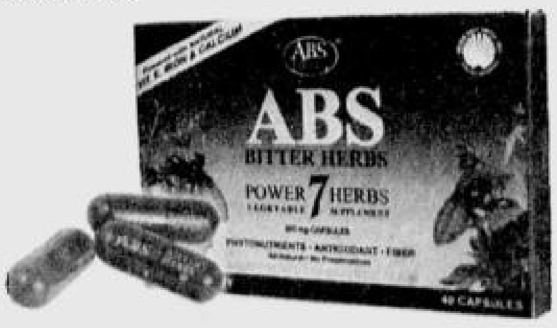

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Italian aid worker abducted in Afghanistan

KABUL—An Italian aid worker was abducted Monday by a gang of armed men while she was driving through the Afghan capital Kabul, Italian Embassy and police officials said here.

Clementina Cantoni, who works for the CARE International charity, was abducted Monday evening by four men while driving in the Qala-e-Mosa district of the city, officials said.

A man who was with her managed to escape, police said, adding that security forces had been mobilized across the city to try to track down the abductors.

There have been several attacks and kidnap attempts on foreigners in recent weeks in Kabul, leading to a tightening of security for the thousands of foreigners who work here.

"It's too early to say who's behind it but whoever they are, they are enemies of peace and stability," said interior ministry spokesperson Lutfullah Mashal of the latest abduction.

The charity said Cantoni, 32, had been engaged in humanitarian work for 10 years and has lived in Afghanistan since March 2002.

Since September 2003, it said in a statement, Cantoni has managed a project which provides food and income-generating activities for 11,000 widows and their children.

"CARE International is deeply concerned and calls for her immediate release," it said.

An Afghan intelligence source said that Cantoni may have been seized by criminals to use as a hostage to secure the release of a jailed comrade, or that her abduction could be the work of militants attempting to undermine security ahead of September's parliamentary elections.

Italian Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini said a special panel had been set up to handle the latest kidnapping involving an Italian national overseas.

Italy is still reeling from the fall-out of the kidnapping in Iraq of journalist Giuliana Sgrena in February. She was released a month later, but the secret service agent who negotiated her freedom was later shot dead by US troops in an incident that has strained Italian-US relations.

Afghanistan has witnessed an alarming spike in violence and insecurity in recent months.

On May 7 armed men attempted to kidnap three World Bank employees—two Americans and an Italian—near Qala-e-Mosa.

The same day, a Burma engineer working for the UN was among three people killed in a suspected suicide bombing at an Internet cafe in Kabul.

On April 10 an American civilian escaped an attempted abduction by managing to open the boot of the car in which he had been locked by unknown kidnappers.

Three UN workers were abducted last October in broad daylight by men in military dress who were members of a criminal gang with links to Islamic militants. They were released a month later but it was not known if a ransom was paid.

While the capital has been generally peaceful, violence has spiraled in southern and southeastern Afghanistan since the country's harshest winter in a decade came to an end and allowed poorly equipped Taliban militants to mount near-daily attacks.

The Taliban are fighting to rid the country of the US-led troops who helped oust them three and a half years ago in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States. *AFP*

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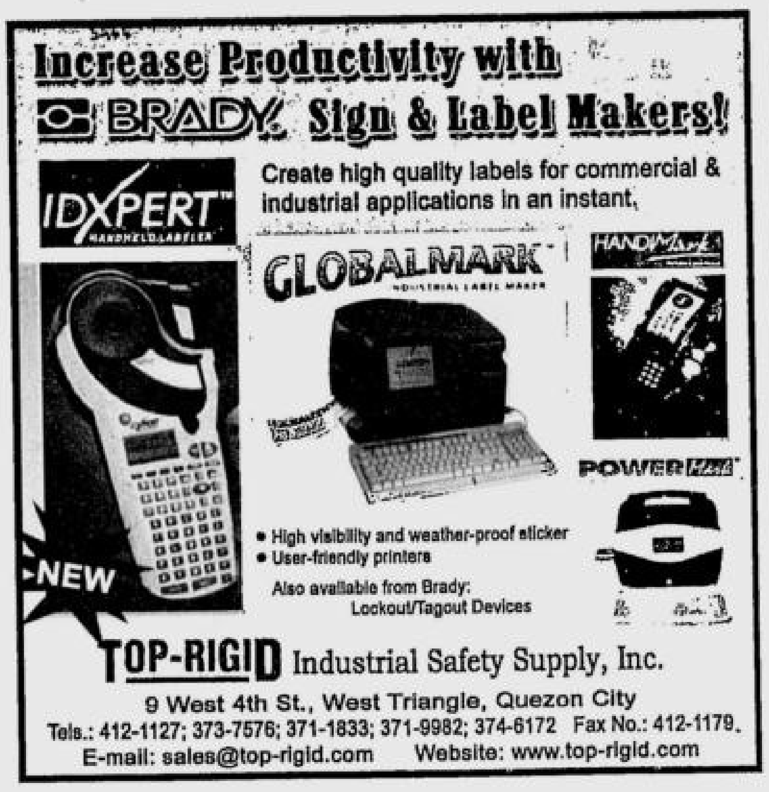
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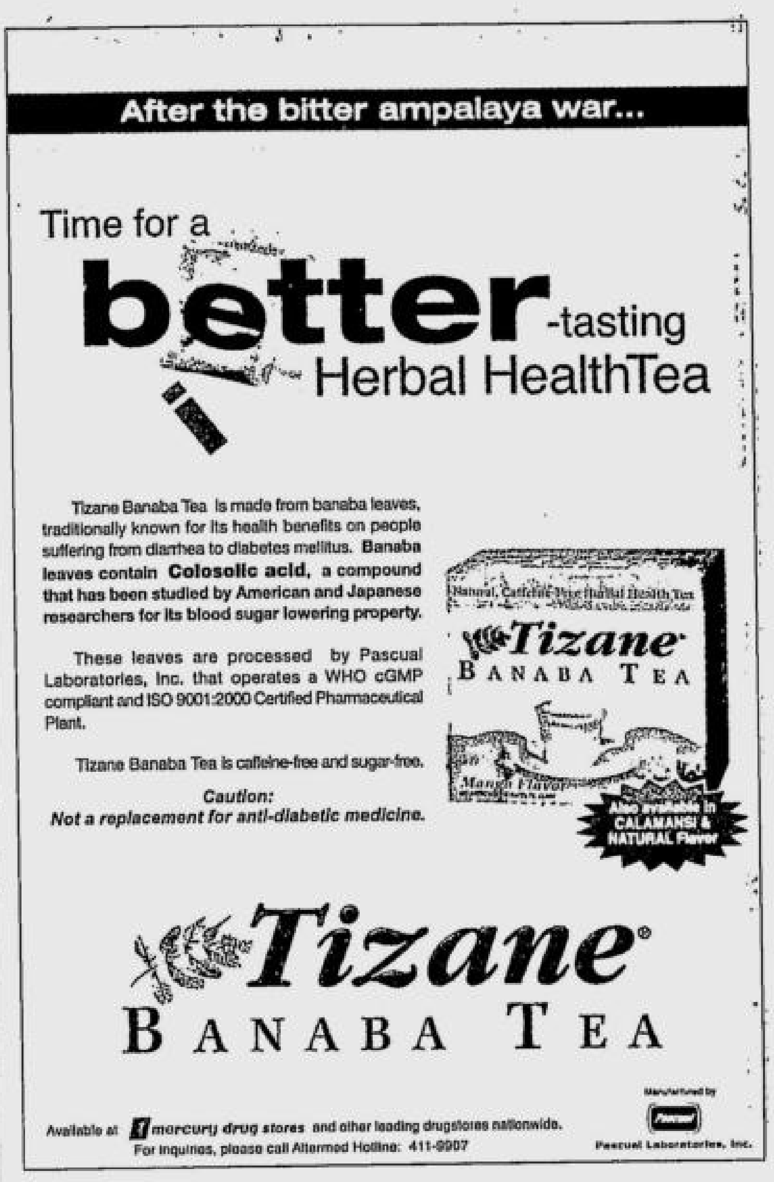
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Opposition says 745 Uzbeks died in wave of unrest

ANDIJAN, Uzbekistan—Cemetery workers hastily buried 37 bodies in a mass grave in Andijan on Tuesday while an opposition party announced its overall tally of 745 people killed by security forces in eastern Uzbekistan since the region exploded in unrest last week.

There has been no independent confirmation of several reports by witnesses and opposition figures of hundreds killed by security forces on Friday in Uzbekistan's fourth-largest city, Andijan, and hundreds more over the weekend in other towns in the region near Kyrgyzstan.

However, the head of the opposition Free Peasants Party, Nigara Khidoyatova, said Tuesday that the group had compiled a list of victims by contacting relatives, collecting the names of 542 people that it says were killed by security forces in Andijan and 203 in Pakhtabad. The count was continuing, she said.

The violence—the worst since this former Soviet republic won independence in 1991—started Friday when government troops in Andijan put down a prison uprising by alleged Islamic militants and a demonstration by citizens about dire economic conditions.

The turmoil undermines the authoritarian government of President Islam Karimov, and puts the United States in a difficult position because Washington relies on Uzbekistan for an air base in the country and anti-terrorism support.

In Andijan on Tuesday, the bodies of 37 young men were wrapped in traditional white shrouds before being placed in a common pit at a cemetery in the southern part of the city.

Abdulgapur Dadaboyev, an activist with the Ezgulik (Kindness) rights group, said in a telephone interview Tuesday that a worker from his group had seen at least 200 bodies still awaiting burial Monday at an Andijan morgue and that more were at a local clinic and a hospital.

Most of the victims appeared to have been shot in the back, he said. Three was no way to corroborate the account.

A respected local doctor in Andijan, speaking on condition of anonymity, earlier said that about 500 bodies were laid out at a school over the weekend for collection by relatives. Other witnesses also have said hundreds were killed when troops put down the uprising Friday.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Monday that the United States was "still trying to understand" what happened in Andijan, but that Uzbekistan needs to a more open political system.

"They really need more political reform and we've been saying that to the Uzbeks for some time," Rice said. "I don't mean that they should tolerate terrorists or terrorist groups... But it is a system that is politically too closed."

"The main preoccupations are now to encourage everybody to forgo any further violence, to help with the refugees that went into Kyrgyzstan out of Uzbekistan, and to try to deal with the consequences right now of this set of issues," she said.

The government has blamed Islamic extremists for the violence.

The crackdown on Friday came after protesters stormed a prison, freed inmates and then seized local government offices. But many of the demonstrators were citizens complaining about poverty and unemployment.

Karimov's government has denied firing on demonstrators. However, an AP reporter and other journalists witnessed troops opening fire on the crowd at Andijan's central square. *AP*

UZBEKISTAN'S special forces guard a street outside a local interior ministry department in the Uzbek town of Andijan. AFP

TV reporter who interviewed Bin Laden insists on innocence

MADRID—Television reporter Tayssir Alluni on Monday recounted how he interviewed Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States and told a Spanish court he was innocent of charges linking him with the extremist group.

Alluni, born in Syria in 1955 and who interviewed Bin Laden for the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera television network on Oct. 21, 2001, is accused of having links to several key figures including Mamoun Darkazanli, believed to be al-Qaida's financier in Europe, according to the charge sheet.

The prosecution maintains Alluni received thousands of dollars to pass on to al-Qaida operatives from Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas, alias Abu Dahdah, thought to have headed the group's Spanish cell.

Yarkas faces 62,512 years in jail for alleged involvement in the Sept. 11 attacks and belonging to a terrorist group.

Alluni's exclusive scoop with Bin Laden five weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks which killed nearly 3,000 people vaulted him into the limelight and he readily related how the interview came about after an emissary made contact on Oct. 7, 2001.

"He said: 'I've come on behalf of Osama bin Laden.' He just said he was an emissary, full stop," said Alluni, relaxed in an open-necked shirt and dark jacket as he described himself as "an independent journalist working for Al-Jazeera.

After putting feelers out, Alluni said a fortnight later he was told he had visitors.

"There are people asking for you—they are at the door," security personnel told him.

Alluni explained further: "They said if you want to cover an important story come with us. Get in the car."

After being blindfolded and driven off for more than two hours the "important story" was waiting for him. *AFP*

Iraq Shiite leaders plead for end to sectarian killings

NAJAF, Iraq—Leaders of Iraq's newly empowered Shiite majority called on their followers not to resort to revenge attacks against the ousted Sunni Arab elite amid a spate of tit-for-tat sectarian killings.

Top Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani called on both communities Monday to maintain brotherly relations, said Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari.

"Sayyed Sistani insisted on the brotherhood between Shiites and Sunnis and the need to include our Sunni brothers in the constitution-drafting process," Jaafari told reporters after meeting the cleric in the holy city of Najaf.

Jaafari, himself a devout Shiite, met the reclusive Sistani a day after the discovery of at least 46 bodies killed execution-style fueled fears of sectarian violence.

Shiite radical leader Moqtada Sadr echoed Sistani's call, urging his followers to exercise restraint.

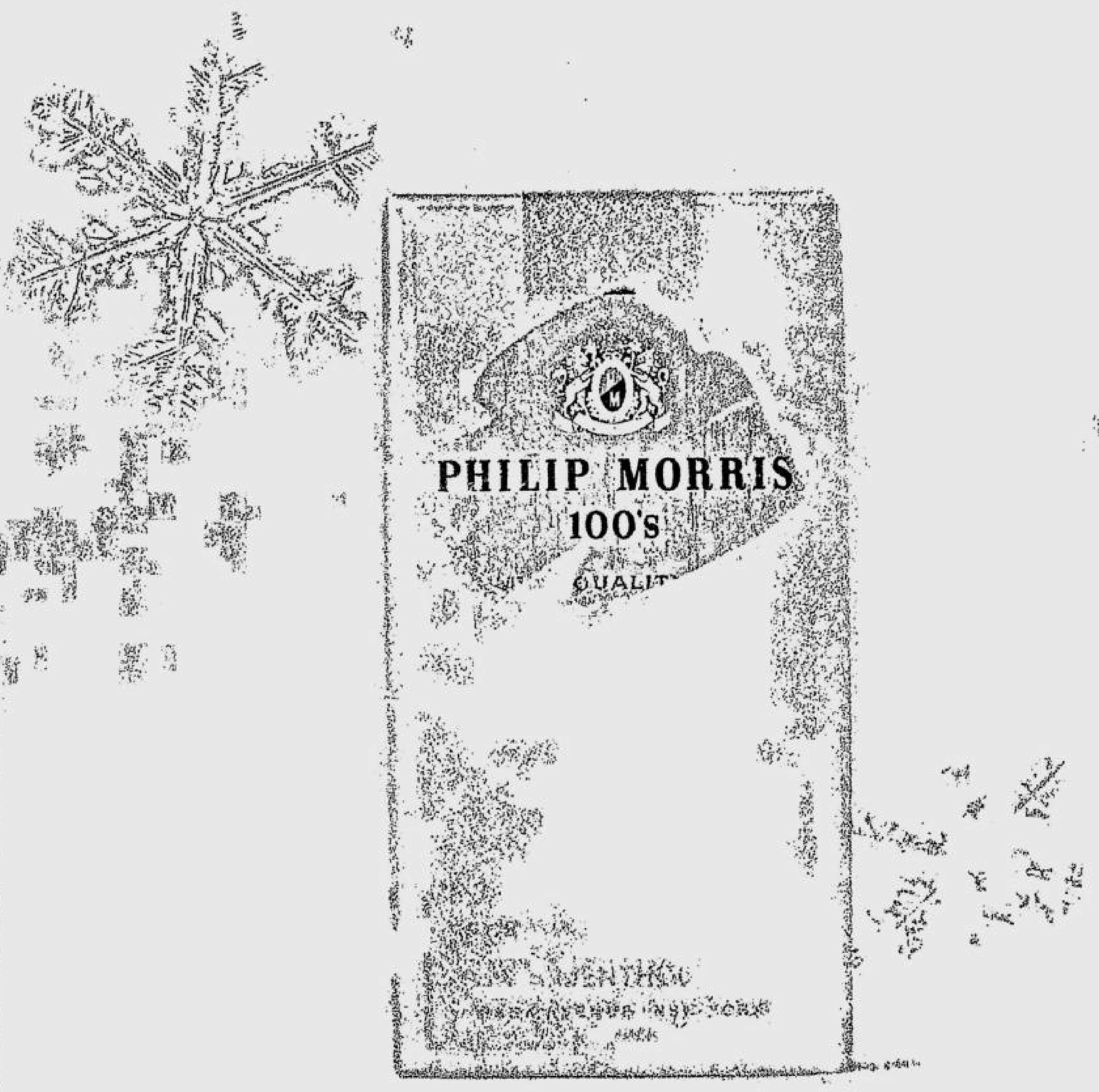
"Any action targeting unarmed civilians is forbidden under any circumstances," Sadr said in a rare public appearance in Najaf, his first since fierce fighting between his outlawed Mehdi Army militia and US troops in the central shrine city last year.

"All Sunnis cannot be held responsible for the terrorist deeds of the occupiers and Nawaseb," he said, referring to Sunni hardliners inspired by the Wahhabi creed dominant in neighboring Saudi Arabia.

Several of the bodies found Sunday were Sunnis apparently killed in tit-for-tat attacks, sparking fears that Shiite militiamen are no longer heeding calls for restraint from their clerics in the face of repeated attacks by Sunni insurgents.

Sunni religious leaders demanded action. The overseer of Sunni religious endowments in Iraq, Adnan Salam al-Dulaimi, called for an investigation. The leading Sunni clerical body—the Committee of Muslim Scholars—blamed Shiite militias for the killings.

"The Committee of Muslim Scholars warns about state terrorism which results from giving militias a free rein to clamp down on our people," spokesman Muthanna Hareth al-Dari said. *AFP*



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North, South Korea nuclear talks bog down

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SEOUL—Inter-Korean talks were deadlocked Tuesday over the nuclear standoff after North Korea sidestepped a new proposal from South Korea to jump start six-party talks, officials said.

Plans for a joint lunch were abandoned following a morning session that left the South Korean chief delegate, Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo, looking grim, pool reports said.

"As we did yesterday (Monday), we again urged North Korea to make the Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons and take part in six-way talks as early as possible," Rhee was quoted as saying.

"Efforts have been made to find common ground, but more discussions will be needed on the nuclear issue."

Rhee made what he described as an "important offer" to entice North Korea back to the six-party talks on Monday but received no word in reply as the two-day session drew to a close.

"The talks are bogged down," an unnamed North Korean delegate was quoted as saying.

The vice ministerial talks in the North Korean border town of Kaesong were the first high-level face-to-face dialogue held in 10 months between the two Koreas and raised hopes for a resumption of six-party talks to end the nuclear standoff.

Washington warned Pyongyang Monday it would pay a price for a further escalation of the nuclear standoff. North Korea claimed that it possessed nuclear weapons in February and last week said it had unloaded spent fuel rods from its nuclear reactor, in a step toward making more nuclear bombs.

Washington said it had not been consulted on the new South Korean offer but expressed no opposition to the bid to break a year-long deadlock in the standoff.

"We're not involved in any new proposal at this point," state department spokesperson Richard Boucher told reporters in Washington Monday.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said a further escalation of the 31-month-old standoff would have consequences for the isolated Stalinist regime.

Taking the matter to the UN Security Council was "an option that's out there," she said. *AFP*

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WORLDBRIEFS

Ferry accident kills 49

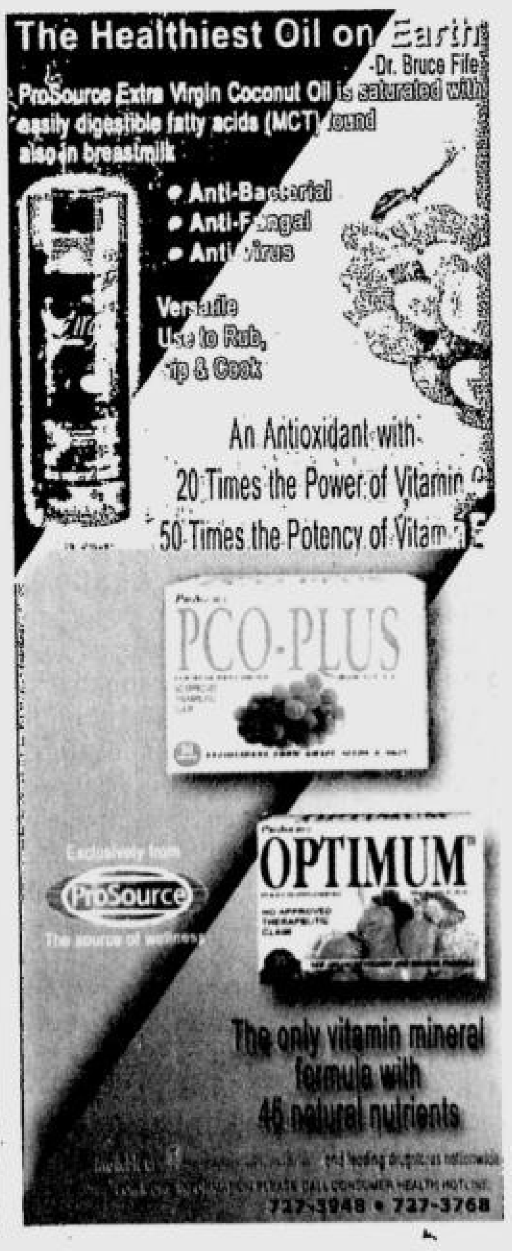
GALACHIPA, Bangladesh—Officials at the scene of a ferry accident in southern Bangladesh said Tuesday they had discovered more bodies overnight bringing the death toll to at least 49. Thirty-eight bodies were found trapped in the sunken ferry by salvage teams who worked through the night to raise the vessel, said local administrator at the scene, Mesbah Uddin. The salvage operation had now been called off. Earlier, 11 bodies were found following the accident in a remote southern area close to the mouth of the Bay of Bengal. The boat was carrying villagers to a weekly market, as well as a wedding party, according to reports. It was feared to have had far more than its capacity of 80 people on board. Officials said Monday they feared many bodies were washed away in stormy weather and that the true number of dead could be more than 100. *AFP*

Plane 'shot down' in Iraq

LONDON—Insurgents armed with rudimentary anti-aircraft weapons likely shot down a British military plane in Iraq earlier this year, killing all 10 servicemen on board, a newspaper reported Tuesday. An interim report into the cause of Britain's biggest single-day loss of life in the Iraq campaign had ruled out almost everything apart from enemy fire and it was suggested that a missile or rocket propelled grenade could have brought the Royal Air Force craft down. A military official, however, told the Daily Telegraph that the report concluded that the C-130 Hercules had been shot down by anti-aircraft rounds, as it flew at a low altitude, possibly 46 meters. "It was shredded by a multi-barreled 20mm canon. They have worked out that's what caused the crash," the anonymous official was quoted as saying in the newspaper. *AFP*

Kuwait women to vote

KUWAIT CITY—Kuwaiti women were granted the right to vote and stand in elections in an amendment to the conservative Gulf emirate's election law that parliament passed on Monday. Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah told reporters at parliament that he planned to name a woman minister. "I congratulate the women of Kuwait for having achieved their political rights," he said. Kuwaiti women now join their counterparts from Gulf neighbors Qatar, Oman and Bahrain in having the vote. The amendment, which was finalized after several years of debate and struggle by Kuwaiti women, passed by a vote of 35 MPs for, 23 against and one abstention. It was opposed by Islamist and tribal legislators. The result, announced by the parliament speaker, was greeted with thunderous applause from the public gallery where supporters of the amendment, including women, were gathered. *AFP*



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OPINION

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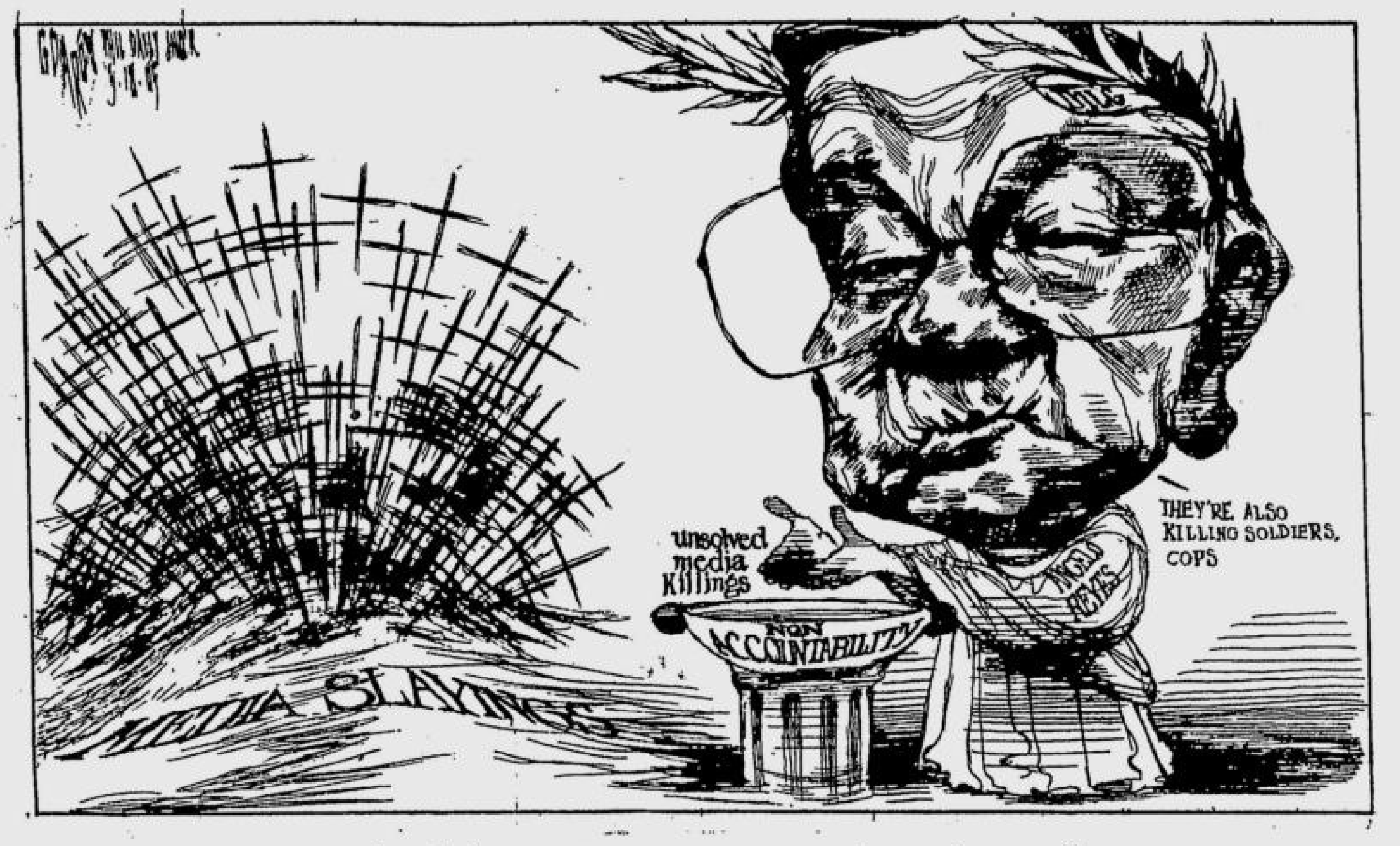

Confusion at the top

EDITORIAL

REACTING to criticisms of Rolando Golez's "What are we in power for?" scale of spending, President Macapagal-Arroyo tried to inject a cautionary comment by saying she was careful about cutting the compensation of professional managers, lest they go back to the private sector. She was referring to something that not a few commentators have noted in the government. The salary levels of government workers and officials are so low that talented people in the private sector are loath to accept even a brief stint in government.

To be sure, Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew has taken every possible chance to point out that civil servants have to be given an opportunity to live comfortably. In fact he made it a policy that salaries paid to government executives and workers should be competitive with their equivalents in the private sector. That is a good idea, and it is one that our own government should pursue. But no one in their right mind would suggest that becoming competitive with private sector compensation demands lavish perks such a P25,000 monthly allowance for gasoline, or P1 million for golf fees, drinks and snacks, or first-class tickets for frequent foreign travels, all of which Golez enjoyed as chief executive officer of the sequestered Coconut Industry Investment Fund. Even a cursory survey of the top companies in the Philippines would show that the executives of such firms don't enjoy such lavish emoluments. And this is precisely the point of the public furor that greeted revelations of irresponsible spending by Golez, who has since been forced—grudgingly—to resign. Such spending is unconscionable and irrational.

The President has issued the usual flurry of instructions, orders and exhortations for her Cabinet members to enforce her administrative order spelling out the do's and don'ts of spending. Her subordinates, however, are only as effective as their boss is credible in what she instructs. When it comes to her instructions, the President is confused and shouldn't be surprised if confusion is the result.

The President cannot have one set of standards for those in the bureaucracy and another for those in government-owned corporations. She cannot act like a doting mother to those who frivolously and criminally milk their jobs for every drop of compensation and privilege they offer just because they happen to work in a corporate environment, and then throw the book at government workers subject to the Byzantine rules of the civil service. Civil servants, for one, would be justified in protesting why they should not get equal treatment as those who work in government-owned corporations. The public, on the other hand, which bears the consequences of the sins of omission and commission of civil servants and workers in government corporations could say the same thing and a lot more that's unprintable, besides.

Even Cabinet members saddled with the duty of enforcing the President's orders could question why they're expected to give up decent careers in the private sector for the low pay, political harassment and general aggravation of working in high-profile positions, when they might as well simply angle for cushy government corporation jobs.

This is the insidious reality of the consequences of the President's handling of the Golez case. That she can't see the issue for what it is, reflects a fundamental flaw in her approach to both ethics and governance.

Contrary to what some officials and even media people say, Filipinos are a reasonable people. They know what is an acceptable level of spending, and do not begrudge officials a certain amount of dignity, or even luxury, commensurate to their position. We are a nation that, rightly or wrongly, does believe in keeping up appearances. It is this belief, however, that also draws the line between permissible emoluments and privileges of a position, and gratuitous spending and abuse of public funds and confidence.

The President needs to be implacable and harsh in applying her own regulations to executives in government corporations. She has the luxury of not being bound by civil service regulations with regard to hiring or firing such people. They should be expected to be bound by the same demand for results—and the same threat of summary firing and dismissal—that their peers live with in the private sector.

Libel law is unconstitutional

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

INSTEAD of redoubling efforts and determination to catch the killers of journalists, various government officials are proposing ways to make life harder not for the criminals but for their victims. Some representatives and a top ranking police general suggested that the penalty for libel be made more severe—as if it were not severe already. Their logic seems to be that if the penalty for libel is harsher, the criminals will stop killing journalists and will just sue them in court. This line of thinking goes on to argue that being unfairly imprisoned for libel is better than being dead. Going still further, it means that journalists will ease up on their exposés and criticisms of wrongdoing in government, which would be just fine for representatives, police officers and other crooks in government.

But what will happen to the people? If at present, with journalists watching and exposing crooked public officials (and getting killed for it), corruption is still this bad, what would happen if journalists suddenly pretended to be blind, deaf and dumb to wrongdoing? It is like opening the bank vault to thieves. Do you remember what happened during the Marcos regime when the press was seduced by the conjugal dictatorship?

Do you realize that instead of going to government to air their grievances, people now go to the press for help? And they get faster help from the press than from the government. The people have lost faith in many government agencies where their taxes go. In fact, people now distrust many public officials, which is why they do not go to them but to the press.

Shouldn't we first catch the killers before changing the libel law to make life harder for the killers' victims? Why punish the victims and not the criminals?

And if the libel law is to be amended, it should be made fairer instead of harsher to journalists. I am not saying that it should be made more lenient to journalists. I am saying that it should be fair to them and should dispense real justice.

As it is now written, I think our libel law is unconstitutional. It violates the guarantee of the Bill of Rights that an accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Because of the presumption of malice in our libel law, an accused is presumed guilty until he proves himself innocent.

When a case of libel is filed, all the elements are already there: defamatory statement, identification, publication and presumed malice. Many journalists think that because they bear no ill will against the complainant when they wrote the alleged libelous story, there's no actual malice, a necessary element in the crime of libel.

But there is such a thing as libel in law, or libel per se, or presumed malice. The moment the story is written and published, it is presumed by law to be malicious and the journalist is already as good as in prison. He gets out of this predicament only if he proves satisfactorily that he has sufficient defenses—privilege, either absolute or qualified, or the public interest—to overcome the presumption of malice.

Even after he achieves that, the complainant still has a chance to prove actual malice and obtain a conviction. Only if he fails to prove actual malice does the journalist get off the hook. Thus, the accused has to prove himself innocent not only once but twice, but the complainant doesn't have to prove anything. The accused is already presumed guilty because of the presumption of malice. It is he who has to prove himself innocent. The burden of proof is on him, not on the complainant. Doesn't that make the libel law unconstitutional?

Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Alfredo Lim, who were guests at last Monday's Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel), said they have filed bills to decriminalize libel. I think that is not necessary. Just make the law more just by removing the presumption of malice in the present law.

Decriminalizing libel will just make judges more prone to giving big civil damages to complainants. And in my many years as a journalist, I have found out that it is the guilty, the crooks and police characters who are quick to file libel charges not only as a cover-up but to try to extract money from journalists and news organizations. Those who are really innocent are content with corrections made by the news organization.

Pimentel has filed another bill that would make it mandatory for newspapers and broadcast stations to report a reply by the complainant. Again, I think this is unnecessary. It is already a long-standing policy of news organizations to get all sides of a story. The trouble is some people do not want to give their side right away. "I want to talk to my lawyer first," he would say. Actually, the real reason is that he has no credible answer yet and he would like to have time to concoct one. Meanwhile, the reporter cannot wait for him indefinitely because he has a deadline to meet. So the story is run without the complainant's side except for the report that he declined to make any statement or that he was unavailable.

But the news organizations would report his side the next day or any time he gives one. It is not always possible, however, to print his side prominently on the front page for the simple reason that many important stories compete for the limited space and air time of a newspaper or a broadcast station.

Journalists labor hard and long to bring these stories to their readers and listeners as quickly as possible. For all that hard work, they are shot and killed. Now tell me, is that fair?

Broke

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"I'M BROKE," Alfonso Yuchengco quipped, as he handed a P250-million check, presumably from his own pocket, to Pacific Plans Inc. (PPI). The pre-need company has issued "open-ended" education plans to some 34,000 souls and is now seeking to be rehabilitated, citing huge losses, and has already gotten a court to issue an order allowing it to suspend payments to claimants. Yuchengco is right about being broke, but in ways his attempts at wry humor do not capture.

The issue has been written and talked about in the media, but its essence has been lost in a blaze of legal and financial fireworks, which has kept it away from public scrutiny despite flaring conspicuously out there. At bottom, it is an issue of injustice. PPI promised an entire tribe of Filipinos that for the investment they made in PPI they would see their kids through school whatever happened. It has broken that promise.

Yuchengco, who owns PPI, though he is at pains now to distance himself from it, is broke for reasons that have nothing to do with making a personal donation to the beleaguered company, which is neither here nor there. He is broke in the sense that GMA is broke after promising all sorts of things to her countrymen and breaking them. It is not financial destitution, it is moral bankruptcy.

Why did a horde of Filipinos buy a Pacific plan? For two reasons, which were in fact how PPI marketed itself. One was its ironclad assurance that it would send its holders' kids to school, come hell or high tuition fees. The contract said so in black and white. And two, planholders could rest assured their future was backed by one of the most trustworthy institutions in this country, which was the Yuchengco group of companies. *Nakasandal sa pader*, as the local saying went, or literally leaning on solid wall. Their word was their bond, and their word was good as gold.

Not so, it turns out.

I understand that a good many plan holders are overseas workers who wanted their children to get what they did not, which is a good quality education, preferably in an exclusive school. That is what makes it horrendous. I know from first-hand experience what monumental sacrifices parents are willing to take just to send their children to school. To have those dreams torn to shreds in this way absolutely sucks.

PPI cites among many reasons why it can't redeem its pledge the fact that tuition has gotten out of hand as a result of deregulation, soaring by as much as 40 percent over the last decade. Unfortunately for it, its holders happen to be numerate as well as literate and have challenged those figures. It has a chart to show that the total tuition increases from 2000 to 2005 across the country add up to no more than 11.37 percent.

And still that is nothing. Because even if tuition fee rose by 40 percent or more, what of it? The equivalent argument is a fire insurance company saying it can no longer pay its policy holders because a series of unusually hot summers during the decade, which it did not count on, has caused an unexpected rash of fires. You are a fire insurance company, you anticipate all possible causes of fire. You are an education plan company, you anticipate all possible causes of tuition increases. That is your business. You guess wrong, or you fail to anticipate right, you pay for your dumbness, not the people you inveigle to barter their future with you. Especially when you promise the latter you will insure them against all possible eventualities.

PPI says as well that it has been absorbing huge losses over the years. That is not true at all—and here it treads on very dangerous ground legally. What has happened is that PPI has transferred all its profitable ventures into another company called Lifetime Plans, and left its open-ended education plan with PPI. Which it further saddled with financial responsibilities that did not belong to it. The figures clearly show so:

In 2003, before PPI was turned into the skeleton it is now, it had a trust fund of P11.2 billion as against liabilities of P10.2 billion. It was perfectly liquid, and indeed registered a net profit of over a billion that year. The next year, after it turned all its profitable ventures to Lifetime, PPI suddenly showed itself to be in dire straits. Which is the reason Yuchengco now is asking for it to be rehabilitated—a proposal which Makati Judge Romeo Barza, a founding member of the Villaraza law office, also called the Firm, which has its tentacles spread out across this country, approved last April.

Parents Enabling Parents (PEP), the group protesting this, points out two things that are wrong with it. First, what would happen if Yuchengco's favorite bank, RCBC, put up another bank, funneled all of RCBC's lucrative activities into it, and left RCBC to pay off all of its obligations? Will RCBC's depositors be happy with this? That is exactly what he has done to PPI. Second, even after PPI has been cannibalized, it still has a trust fund that can meet the claims of its open-ended education plan holders. The only problem is that the bulk of the fund is tied up with Napocor bonds, a questionable investment explainable only by the fact that one of Yuchengco's companies has reinsured Napocor. But why now should the plan holders, parents who have shelled out precious money in the hope of giving their kids at a crack at a decent future, be held hostage to these criminal shenanigans?

Trust is the one thing the holders of open-ended education plans from PPI gave Yuchengco when they took him at his word. It is the one thing he has squandered like a drunken sailor, little helped by that silly show of pinching from his own (bulging) pockets to appease the aggrieved. He's right: he's broke now.

Very, very broke.

PR offensive doomed to fail

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CHIEF executives of the country's three leading broadcasting networks—GMA-7, ABS-CBN and ABC—in collaboration with Ayala Corp. have marshalled their media resources behind a concerted effort to spray a new gloss of paint on the battered image of the faltering and beleaguered second administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Accounts of their meeting with the President at Malacañang said the media barons pledged "to support an aggressive information" campaign to be directed by the Philippine Association of National Advertisers. The meeting followed acceptance by the President of an offer of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines "to help build up her image by ensuring that the people were made aware of her successful projects and initiatives."

The purpose of this media blitz, the most extensive propaganda campaign ever undertaken by any Philippine administration since Marcos' martial law regime, was spelled out by a statement of PANA, which said "the general objective of the campaign is to take away the blame from the government as the cause of the high cost of energy and educate the (public) that the government had no direct control on the movement of oil prices dictated by the world market."

The campaign will be launched in leading TV networks and radio stations and followed by a series of paid ads in the newspapers. It is intended to counter the "negative" news in the newspapers and electronics media operating under the adversarial tradition of the press. It will focus on the "positive" or "good" news. As such, the campaign seeks to saturate or swamp the information landscape with advertising material—not news—that will suffocate the media atmosphere with the "successful projects and initiatives" of the administration.

The campaign is being launched obviously to halt the nose-dive in the President's popularity since she won a fresh electoral mandate in the May 2004 election.

From the above objectives, I can see a number of problems. The first is that the campaign intends to sell the administration and its "achievements" like a commercial commodity, which a government is not. Related to this is the difficulty in selecting its "successes and achievements." If, for example, the achievements of the administration were set against the targets of the 10-point agenda enunciated by the President at the beginning of her second term, the propaganda effort might find it hard to identify a list of "successes." If the eight-point tax reform agenda were considered, only three measures, including VAT reform, have been passed, and the VAT breakthrough after a legislative stalemate cannot be considered a brilliant success, according to rigorous tests of independent journalists. The VAT bill in its present form is simply full of compromises.

The second problem is that, from the advertising point of view, the campaign focuses on the image problem of the administration as stemming from the rising oil prices, which have a domino effect on prices of basic commodities. According to opinion surveys, rising prices are the biggest source of public discontent that has undermined public confidence in the administration and are responsible for her skidding popularity.

The campaign may help clarify and even demonstrate that the administration cannot be blamed for escalating oil prices. Economies all over the world, including those of the rich industrial countries, are hostage to rising oil prices, which are determined by two important factors, production output of the oil producing countries, and the demand of oil-dependent economies, such as ours, as well as the big industrial economies.

The PR campaign's focus on the externally determined oil prices is narrow and tends to ignore other factors responsible for the difficulties of the Arroyo administration. Oil prices alone are not sufficient to explain why the administration is in deep trouble. With this limited focus, the campaign is doomed to fail. The campaign should take into account other factors that are causing serious image problems for the administration.

The administration is not only unable to get a handle on rising prices but is also having a huge problem arising from the perception that it is a non-performing administration. It has a well-defined economic program and it has made big noises over its intentions to build a "strong republic," and is using all the symbolisms of state power. But against these symbolisms and rhetorical pronouncements, the administration is short in delivering results.

There is a head of state, but the head of state operates from a vacuum. It does not lead. There is widespread public perception, as well from the business community and the politically aware middle class communities, that although the President is visible, there is no one in charge. There is a perception that the leadership is unstable and lacks firm direction and that the country is in a state of drift—without a firm leadership compass. Leadership is perceived as susceptible to decision making that is determined by convenience and the dictates of political exigencies.

The President tends to believe that promulgating orders—such as that cracking down on armed violence on defenseless citizens, among them journalists—is sufficient to make the law be obeyed by criminals and law-breakers. Orders from the top—no matter how toughly worded—are not implemented down the line and don't get results, as auto-pilot switches.

The PR campaign is bound to fail because it is wrongly and narrowly focused on its analysis of the causes of the administration's image problem.

Laughing at ourselves

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"HOW long did your scriptwriter have to watch TV non-stop?" I inquired of director Jeffrey Jeturian, as we exited the screening of his latest opus "Bikini Open." I wondered because the movie captures, with uncanny verisimilitude, the stock phrases and poses of TV anchors and reporters and the typical replies and reactions of anyone who falls into their traps.

But then I realized that so common and standard have these spiels and formulas become that they have evolved into a language all their own. Surf the channels, but especially during the early evening newscasts and the very late public affairs programs, and you will know what I mean. Everybody seems to be using the same words, adopting the same stances, even using the same tone, that blend of earnest concern and moralistic indignation that both fascinates and repels.

Much of the media commentary in "Bikini Open" falls upon Cherry Pie Picache, who captures with perfect pitch and subtle mimickry the persona of our better known female anchors and public affairs hosts. I have always admired the work of Picache, one of our yeoman actors who take on even the most obscure roles with gusto and imbue even the briefest of parts with integrity. As a public affairs host battling nose-diving ratings by exposing the private lives of contestants in a "Bikini Open King and Queen" contest, Picache is alternately nasty and nice but always on the lookout for the sensational and seamy. Suffice it to say that she gets what she deserves—including ratings through the roof—by the time the movie ends.

Describing "Bikini Open" as a satire on the state of the Philippine media does it somewhat a disservice, because more than that, it is a good fun romp. There are many things to laugh at in the movie, mostly ourselves, and our penchant for celebrity and striking it rich the easy way. And while there's plenty of bared flesh, of the male and female variety, Jeturian keeps the display within reasonable limits.

Perhaps the movie's biggest message is that there are far worse forms of exploitation and cruelty than asking young men and women to parade around in skimpy outfits. And one of the worst perpetrators is the industry to which we belong. *Aray ko!*

* * *

YOU don't have to be a journalist to find the story of Stephen Glass and his unprecedented rise and ignominious fall fascinating. "Shattered Glass," a film based on the final days of the young journalist at the respected publication The New Republic, is a vivid thriller, a riveting psychological study, as well as a commentary on the failings and vulnerabilities of journalism.

At 25, Glass it seemed had journalism's golden ring within his grasp. Already, he was an associate editor at TNR, which prided itself on being "the inflight magazine of Air Force One," a publication which, while modest in circulation, had an enviable readership and immeasurable power, influencing policy where it mattered.

But to get where he was, Glass, it seemed, was willing to violate his profession's most sacred principles and rules, which boiled down to "telling the truth." This telling of Glass' short-lived career is not just a portrait of a hotshot with a deadly impulse to please, but also an examination of how even the more experienced editors of a respectable publication can allow themselves to be deceived simply because they like a reporter.

True, however much safeguards and how many fact-checkers editors put in place, there is still no protection against a writer or reporter who deliberately sets out to deceive. It happens to the best in the industry. Another lesson here is the most effective deterrent to the ambitious and less than ethical is still a skeptical editor, as well as competitors on the scent of a scoop.

* * *

BY THE WAY, if you want the "full" Star Wars experience during tonight's special screenings (they used to be known as "sneak previews") of "Episode 3: The Revenge of the Sith," a group of die-hard Pinoy enthusiasts will show up in Greenbelt 3 in full Star Wars regalia.

The costume parade is but the prelude to "New Worlds Episode 3: The Third Philippine Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention" to be held from May 23 to 24 at the Glorietta Activity Center. May 23 is "Star Wars Day," featuring a Star Wars costume contest, lightsaber battles, a droid hunt, and lectures on the more serious aspects of this cultural phenom.

May 24 is "New Worlds Day," for all the member groups of the New Worlds Alliance. Name a science fiction and fantasy series and I'm sure it's represented in the alliance, which counts among its member-groups Matrix Philippines; Pinoy Slayers, the Pinoy Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Angel the Series club; Arkham Philippines, the H.P. Lovecraft group; the Alliance of Eclectic Gamers and Interactive Storytellers (Aegis); the Philippine Order of Narnians (TPoN); Via Astris Inc., which is the Star Trek fan club; The Philippine Tolkien Society; Pinoy Harry Potter; Pinoy X-philes; the Philippine Highlander Society; MechaPinoy, the local chapter of the International Gundam mailing list; Science Fiction Philippines, a group devoted to general science fiction TV shows and movies; Charmed Pinoy; Pinoy Fremen (fans of "Dune," obviously); and Krypton Philippines, the local Smallville fan group.

It's not all fun and games, apparently. Fans, enthusiasts, critics and academics will be delivering lectures and well-known performers have been invited. The convention will also host the "NWA Race," the New Worlds' version of "The Amazing Race," memorabilia exhibits, fan film screenings, costume contests, and more. For more information, just access the group's website: http://www.newworlds.ph

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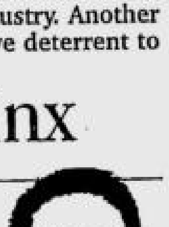
The Sphinx

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



ASIDE from making his mark in Philippine art, where critics and art historians have installed him in a niche reserved for "The Master of Philippine Expressionism," the late lamented Ang Kiu Kok is best remembered for his unforgettable performance in Malacañang when he was conferred the National Artist Award in 2001. All the newly minted (some would say "canonized" or "elevated") artists were required to give some sort of a response. When Ang's turn came he stood up on the rostrum only to realize that careless technical personnel had forgotten to adjust the microphone to his basketball player 5'11 height (the National Artist who spoke before him was much shorter). To everyone's surprise, Ang did not wait for the microphone to be adjusted. He simply bent down to its level, eliciting polite giggling from the audience. He started, faltered, and then delivered the shortest acceptance speech in the history of the awards: just two words, "*Maraming salamat,*" repeated thrice in a painful scene caught on camera.

This was not new to the Davao-born painter who used words sparingly. He had always been wary of big events and crowds. In fact, he didn't even attend the openings of his own shows. During the Retrospective exhibition of his work at the Metropolitan Museum, he skipped the inaugural cocktails but appeared in the museum early the next morning before other people turned up. Thus, it has been suggested that what he couldn't or wouldn't express in words he made up for in paintings that so eloquently evoked the struggles of our time.

Ang was like the Sphinx, his life and his art being one big riddle to be unlocked. Two decades ago when I was a magazine writer desperately in search of features, I arranged an interview with him. We spent a whole afternoon together and I watched him paint in a small cluttered room in his Quezon City home. The end result of that interview were all of five words that included "Good afternoon" and "Goodbye." I don't recall the fifth word, but it must have been a curt answer to a long probing question like "*oo*" or "*hindi.*"

Ang was an interviewer's nightmare. I now regret not visiting again to make him comfortable enough to tell me about himself and his art. What I regret even more is that I did not even buy one of his paintings at the time when they were affordable (or could probably be paid on installment) because these days they fetch seven figures at international auctions.

It is this one-on-one meeting with him that made me wary of reading the prepared speech for the chair of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts at the necrological service for the National Artist held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines last Sunday afternoon. The text was competent and profound. What Ang did not say in words: "…his brushstrokes said for him, [exposing] the disturbing world around him. His animal series alluded to humanity's bestial nature, his Crucifixion series to the nailing of God by Christians who believed in Him but did exactly the opposite of his teachings. According to art critic Emmanuel Torres, his works 'did not arouse the usual associations people expect of art: that it offers the familiar comfort of an easy chair. Instead, they reflect a melancholy obsessed with the imagery of pain and struggle.' His works were angry.

"Rebelling against widespread dehumanization by humanity itself, he produced in work after work statements of indignation that, in truth, were an appeal. His bold strokes, irregular lines, and dark colors were a call for us to make a 180-degree turn for the better."

Why do we turn to preaching and homiletics when placed in such a formal situation? I read the above and wondered what Ang would have said. What was he really trying to say in his work? Are we over-reading? Perhaps we have put our own personal meanings into an imagery that he merely picked up from his surroundings—doors and cramped space, junkyards, junk heaps, still life of tables with bottles, fish spines or assorted fruit, the vines and cacti, or the saddest clowns you have ever seen. Perhaps we should appreciate how Ang's genius magically transformed simple ordinary objects into extraordinary works of art, paintings that actually function like a mirror or an ink-blot test to uncover our fears and aspirations, our own private angst rather than Ang's angst.

One cannot tell now whether we are (un)fortunate that Ang did not explain his own work either in writing or in speech. For the moment, we are at the mercy of critics, art historians and our own broken selves. If only for this prodigious production of first-rate, quality art that will speak to other Filipinos in another time and place, Ang's work has achieved a timelessness that makes us realize he truly deserves the National Artist award better expressed in its Filipino form: Pambansang Alagad ng Sining. Thus, we bid goodbye to the Sphinx and in behalf of a grateful nation whose flags were flown at half-staff last Monday as a tribute to him, we return his own words: "*Maraming salamat…maraming salamat…maraming salamat.*"

And to all this, we add our own heartfelt *paalam.*

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Four-day work week

IT looks like the expression of relief, "TGIF" (Thank God it's Friday), is going to be rapidly replaced in the Philippines by "*Biyernes ngayon*" (It's a Friday), uttered in exasperation.

I was attending a meeting the other day at a hotel and used the lunch break to call my friend and ask, "Did you get your birth certificate yet?" The certificate was needed with some urgency so he could get a passport.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

"No," he answered, "I dropped by the Census office but… *Biyernes ngayon.*" The four-day work week means many government offices close down on Fridays.

But the world doesn't stop for us. That Friday, I had a meeting with an international consultant, together with colleagues from the university, with a government agency hosting the meeting. We had been working on a budget worksheet, using a computer and an LCD projector so everyone in the room could keep track of the line items, but when we were about to resume after lunch, we realized, with horror, that the projector was missing. Apparently, staff members from our host agency had gone home bringing with them the projector. A few frantic phone calls later, an embarrassed host told us, "We can't get the LCD projector back. No secretaries, no drivers. Everyone's gone home…"

Yes, you guessed it, *Biyernes kasi.*

Labor aristocrats

I tried to keep an open mind when the four-day work week was first proposed for national government agencies. The bureaucrats who planned this said it was an energy-saving measure. Well and good. I could also empathize with the many employees in Metro Manila who spend hours commuting, and so an extra day off could go a long way for the family and for personal matters.

I'd seen the reduced work week in many countries, producing good results. One attraction, in fact, for Filipino nurses to go to the United Kingdom is that their regular work week consists of three days of 12 hours each. Imagine four days off!

Generally, especially in Europe, the reduced work week is supposed to give people more time for their families, and personal needs. This is said to have enhanced productivity because workers return to their offices recharged.

But I should say I've also seen another side to these reduced work weeks. I did my doctoral studies in the Netherlands and used to go nuts with their reduced week. Administrative staff would come in only three days a week and, well, they weren't quite efficient.

My Dutch friends would mutter, "labor aristocrats." You couldn't go after them for inefficiency because they were permanent employees. Besides, these government labor aristocrats were always complaining about low pay and how they were willing to put in only so much effort, commensurate with their wages.

AIDS

All that sounds familiar? Yes, we have our labor aristocrats too. And I'm afraid the four-day week exacerbates many of the problems around this labor aristocracy, in particular an epidemic of AIDS. AIDS here means As If Doing Something. They're pretty good at reporting for work, especially now that many government offices require bundy clocks. So people are at their desks, but with this AIDS.

Let's look at how it works out. An employee comes in and usually will put in some work the first two hours or so before calling it a day. On a five-day week, that means 10 hours of productivity (more or less). On a four-day week, that's eight hours.

The already inefficient ones become even more inefficient with the four-day week. And the ones who weren't too bad with their work…well, I'm afraid the longer days that they have to put in simply saps them of their energy. It mainly affects those who have to do routine repetitious work, such as those in the Census office. So, although they're supposed to do 10 hours, the extra two hours become dead time, people slowing down with their work, or conveniently disappearing from their posts.

Rather than boosting productivity, some workers complain that the long hours have adversely affected their health. One of my staff has clocked in four absences in the last two weeks, which can be disastrous considering that we only had eight working days during that period.

Penalizing the diligent

What worries me most about the four-day work week is the way it penalizes the more hard-working. It's the diligent ones who have to take up the slack, putting in more time for other people's reduced productivity.

In many cases, it's actually middle management that is most severely penalized. The big bosses, already on leisurely schedules even before the four-day week, now have even more free time for their golf. But middle managers find they have to be on call 40 hours from Mondays to Thursdays, and have to come in to work overtime on Fridays, often to check on the backlog produced by inefficiency.

Some staff from government agencies have complained, too, about the lack of synchronization. At UP, for example, many units have administrative staff on four-day weeks, but classes go five or even six days. As a department chair, I've had to be on call again to respond to all kinds of administrative needs—without administrative staff.

I'm not complaining about the overtime and lack of administrative support. I've been teaching graduate classes for years now, which means lecturing up to 7 or 8 p.m., so even without administrative support, I'm able to survive. Agencies with international links, as in my case, also put in overtime to deal with faxes and teleconferences from our partners abroad, on their time.

But I do wish we'd look more carefully at the four-day week and see if it's really helping. I'd think there are other ways of saving energy besides cutting down on the work week. I'm amazed at how freezing cold some government offices can be, air-conditioners going full blast through most of the day.

I'd be curious, too, if this four-day work week has helped family life. My guess is that the women do appreciate this extra time, which goes to domestic responsibilities. I know a few women who have actually used the extra day to do a bit of business to augment their meager government salaries.

With the men, it's probably a different story. One wife of a government driver told me she prefers the old five-day week, explaining in Tagalog: "It used to be that he'd go off with his office mates to drink on Friday and Saturday nights. Now he does this on Thursday night, sleeps the whole day Friday, and then goes out again Friday and Saturday nights."

Not good. Wives used to worry about *Sabado* nights; now it's *Huwebes* and *Biyernes* nights as well. And if government employees seem to have difficulties getting started when they report for work on Monday, you can imagine what kind of l-o-n-g weekend hangover they're nursing.

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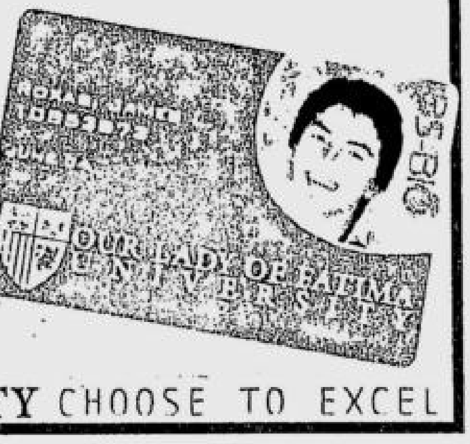

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LETTERS

'Pustahan tayo': jueteng here to stay

WHY can't *jueteng* be stopped? The reason is that gambling is an ingredient of Filipino culture. We gamble on anything. Mayor Cruz says the President is coming to attend the town fiesta. Vice Mayor Cruzado bets a case of San Miguel beer that she is not coming. We almost always follow up our statements with "*Pustahan tayo.*"

For me, I would rather have *jueteng* legalized to minimize, if not eradicate, corruption.

Incidentally how come cockfighting and horse-racing were legalized? Another reason why Filipinos play *jueteng* is that bettors don't consider it a sin. Even some parishes here and in the States make use of "bingo" to generate funds for the needs of poor parishes.

—FR. JOSE G. INGARAN,
Clergy Ret., House Guibang,
Gamu, 3301 Isabela

The pope in my mind

I WANT to have a pope who is conservative in life and in marriage. A kind of pope who is against all forms of contraception and euthanasia; a kind of pope who is firm and steadfast on Church's teaching, especially the teaching on the sanctity of human life—that, as God's children, we are placed in this world to help our Creator in creating and promoting life, not vice versa. And any form of contraception is at all times sinful because it is against life and against nature.

I want to have a pope who always upholds the indissolubility of marriage, that it is for life and only between man and woman. Divorce must be banned forever because the principle of marriage is like a covenant between Yahweh and Israel, Jesus and his Church, a kind of covenant that is eternal. The teaching of Jesus is very clear, "What God has joined together, let no man separate." The wisdom of this teaching is that our way of loving must be like that of Jesus, constant, never-changing, eternal. That is why in marriage, the contracting parties are asked three times and they profess their great "I do's," "for better or for worse, till death do us part." Furthermore, allowing divorce is tantamount to teaching husband and wife to be insincere and to lie, when on the day of their wedding, they commit and pledge before God and his Church to love one another forever. Thus, the so-called irreconcilable differences or the loss of love can't justify a divorce.

But I want a pope who is liberal on women priests and celibacy. I want a pope to allow women to become priests; provided there is scarcity of vocation in a country. I think it is not the fault of the woman that she was born a woman which becomes a barrier or impediment for becoming a priest. The argument that because Jesus' 12 apostles are men no longer holds water. We know it was just part of the culture as during that time women were not regarded as human persons but things.

But I want a pope to allow married men to become priests provided they are virtuous, upright and no longer have dependents. On the other hand, I do not want the pope to allow priests to get married; if they want to marry they have to get out of the ministry.

I want a pope who is actively progressive on issues like human rights, social justice, equality and freedom, interreligious dialogue and ecology.

I want a pope who is like Christ, protector of the defenseless, the weak, the outcasts, the marginalized and the oppressed.

And lastly, I want a pope to make real that image of the Church as "church of the poor" not only by siding with the poor, but more by living poor like Jesus Christ did.

—FR. RUFINO PEPOYE CABATINGAN

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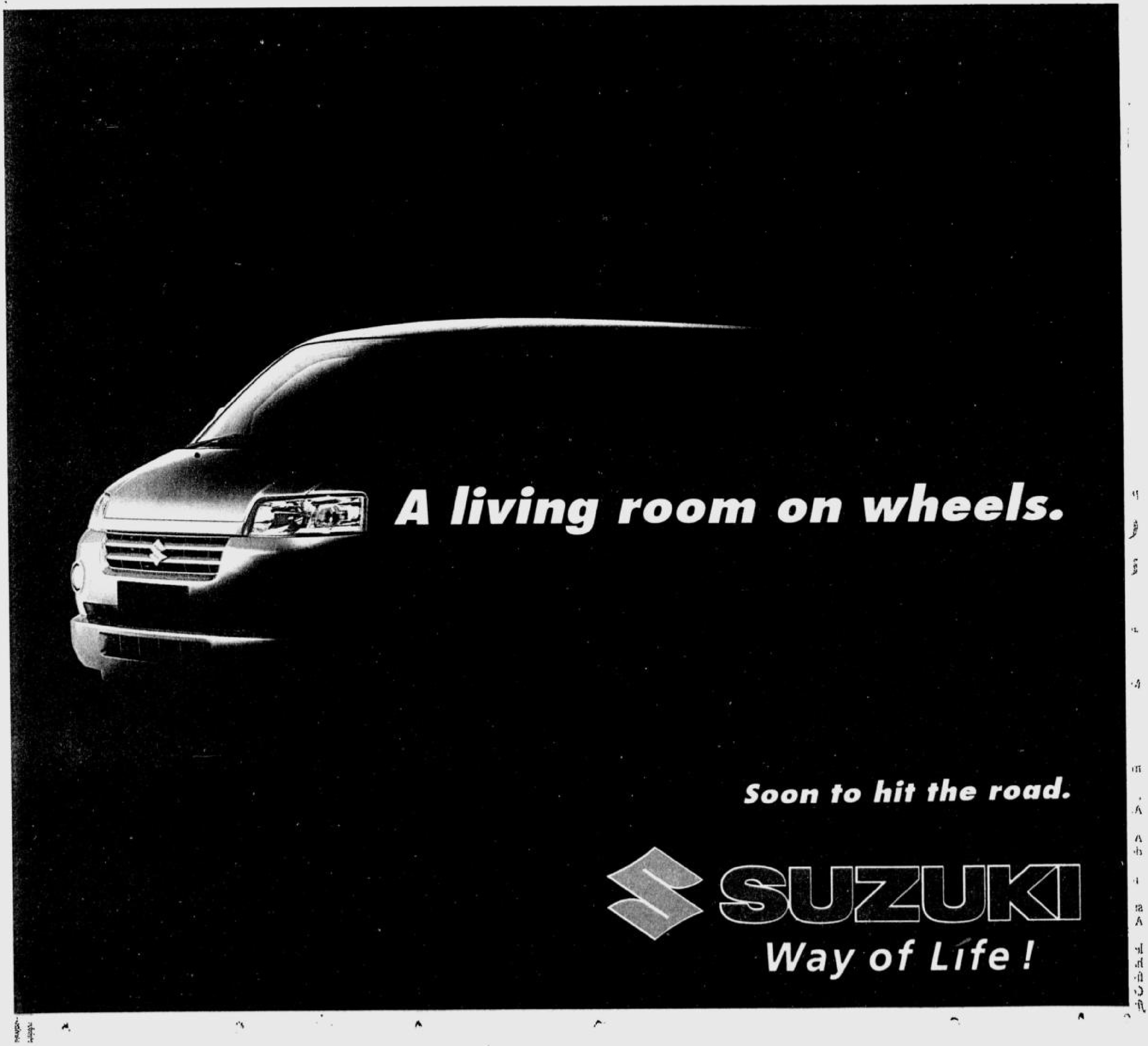

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With bishop away, 'jueteng' resumes

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—With Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena out of the country, gambling lords and their protectors have been intensifying "jueteng" operations in the province.

Police sources said thrice-a-day draws had been held for the past days in four of the province's largest towns, with *cobradores* (bet collectors) openly collecting bets since Villena left the province on May 11.

According to his staff members, Villena, a staunch crusader against the illegal numbers game here, went to Guadalajara, Mexico, to speak before delegates of a worldwide eucharistic congress. No date has been set for his return.

Villena's absence, according to the police, has allowed gambling lords to resume jueteng operations without fear of being chastised by the bishop, or their protectors being the subject of the prelate's exposés.

Quoting illegal gambling insiders, Villena earlier tagged a top local official and police officers as the alleged brains behind the continued illegal gambling operations in the province.

Villena, in an earlier statement, also challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo to openly declare her campaign against jueteng, if only to prove that she was not tolerating the proliferation of the illegal numbers game in the country.

Jueteng operations briefly stopped on April 28, after Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, warned all regional police directors of possible relief if the illegal numbers game persisted in their areas.

But operations were revived here after barely two days.

Police sources said the suspension late last month was only meant to allow for a change in the management of jueteng operations.

Illegal gambling activities continued, a source said, even after Senior Supt. Robert Mangaccat assumed his post as acting provincial police director on May 5.

Mangaccat, who was in a conference at the regional police office in Tuguegarao City on Tuesday, referred the INQUIRER to Supt. James Afalla, deputy director for operations, for comments.

Afalla denied the existence of jueteng in the province.

"Although we admit that [jueteng] has been on and off in the past days, I can assure you now that collections have stopped in the province. This is a result of the crackdown ordered by the President," Afalla said.

He said they had received reports of bet collections in certain areas, but these were refuted by the chiefs of police there. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

House to hold new probe of quarry scam

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The House committee on good government begins today its investigation of alleged irregularities in the collection of taxes from quarrying and hauling of Mt. Pinatubo sand in Pampanga.

The inquiry was called by party-list Representatives Emmanuel Joel Villanueva (Cibac), Renato Magtubo (Partido ng Manggagawa), Florencio Noel (An Waray) and Mujiv Hataman (Anak Mindanao).

Provincial administrator Fidel Arcenas and provincial treasurer Vergel Yabut confirmed attendance to the inquiry that Congress was conducting since the controversy erupted anew in January when the Natural Resources Development Corp. proposed to supervise the collection for the provincial government.

The NRDC, the corporate arm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, found the capitol's collection system grossly inefficient, comparing its revenues of P382.6 million from 1999 to 2001 and the capitol's P45.1 million from 2002 to 2004.

The first investigation, by the House committee on natural resources, looked into the income-generating prospects of the sand industry, which Pampanga Rep. Reynaldo Aquino said could bring in revenues of P600,000 daily and as much as P1 billion yearly.

The committee has yet to release its findings and recommendations from the Feb. 9, March 1 and March 16 hearings.

It was at the last hearing, though, that the NRDC managed to re-file its proposal that Gov. Mark Lapid's seven allies in the provincial board earlier rejected.

Lapid and the board, which both assert that the capitol has the sole mandate to collect local taxes, have yet to act on the proposal.

The House committee on good government is expected to open the hearing with the alleged use of fake receipts in the quarry collection.

It still was not known if the governor's father, Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, would be summoned to the hearing. As a three-term governor, he chaired the quarry task force until his son took over in July last year. He has wrestled with the controversy since 1998.

Governor Lapid has denied irregularities under his watch. Only his father, he said, could answer for the supposed anomalies that happened during his administration.

The governor has reported increasing the quarry collections to P13.1 million as of May 15. The amount was almost half of the P30-million target this year.

The young Lapid appealed to his detractors to give his administration a chance to further improve collection. *Tonette Orejas with a report from Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Group says Army used for mining

BUTUAN CITY—Military operations in the resource-rich Andap Valley complex in Surigao del Sur are part of a government strategy to ease the entry of foreign mining firms, a militant group charged.

The complex covers the towns of Lianga, Marihatag, San Miguel and San Agustin.

Lawyer Antonio Azarcon, spokesperson of Karapatan-Surigao del Sur, said at least 20 mining firms had expressed interest in exploring the area for gold and other minerals.

But he said the people were opposed to mining.

"This is a clearing operation of the military to ensure the entry of the mining firms," Azarcon said.

Maj. Alexis Bravo, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based in Cagayan de Oro City, laughed off Azarcon's allegations.

"The military is not in contact with any mining firm," he told the INQUIRER.

Bravo said the military operations were designed to flush out communist New People's Army rebels holed up in the Andap complex.

Since military strikes started in late April, at least 10 rebels and two junior military officers have been killed while dozens of combatants from both sides were wounded. *Franklin A. Caliguid and Grace C. Albasin with a report from Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Labor, business sign pact for strike-free Cavite

DASMARIÑAS, Cavite—Leaders of different government agencies, business groups and the labor sector yesterday signed what was described as a historical covenant that aims to promote a strike-free Cavite and work toward sustained industrial peace in the province.

Initiated by Labor Undersecretary Danilo Cruz and Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Maliksi, the agreement, dubbed the "Social Accord for Industrial Peace, Stability, Job Preservation and Strengthening of Employment in the Province of Cavite," was signed by 58 sectoral representatives from both the national and provincial levels.

The ceremony, held at the First Cavite Industrial Estate in Barangay Langkaan here, was attended by more than 500 individuals and representatives of over 60 organizations, including 23 labor unions.

Militant unions, such as the Kilusang Mayo Uno-affliated group Solidarity of Cavite Workers, were conspicuously absent.

"In these times of economic hardships, a strong cooperation among the government, business and labor sectors is what we need [to overcome these economic challenges]," Cruz said in his message to the delegates.

He said the agreement was a big boost to the government's program to avoid business closures that could lead to unemployment and displacement of thousands of workers.

Dispute resolution

In his speech, Maliksi said the agreement was only the second of such kind in the entire country and the first in Luzon.

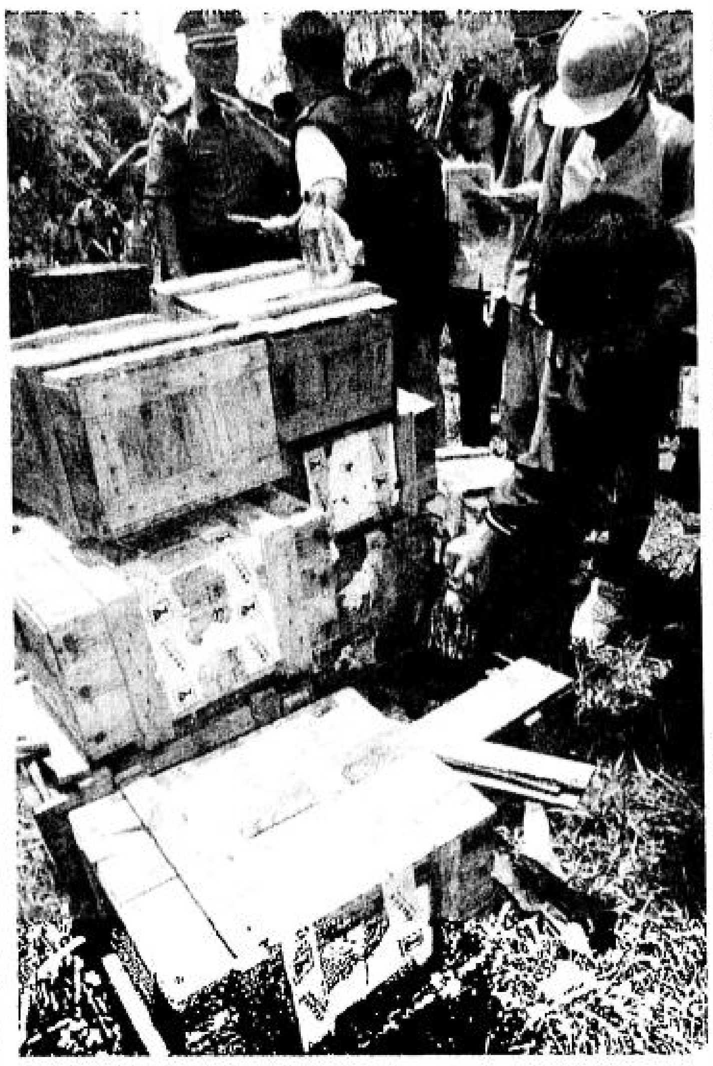
He said the covenant was actually an offshoot of the formation of the Cavite Industrial Peace Council and the Cavite Tripartite Industrial Peace Council.

The two labor councils were conceptualized to resolve labor disputes without going through union strikes and lockouts, he said.

"I am proud to say that our initiatives to foster peaceful dialogues and negotiations led to the dramatic decrease of union strikes in Cavite [in the past three years]," he said.

From a total of 43 strikes in 2001, there was no recorded strike in 2004, he said.

"This we did without violating the rights of the workers but through peaceful consultations," he said, adding: "I, myself, have never issued a no-strike policy in Cavite. I am a firm believer of trade unionism. But it should not be an obstacle to progress." *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



DRUG HAUL VAL HANDUMON

Antinarcotics agents inspect some of the 39 crates containing chemicals used for the manufacture of shabu and which were seized in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan on Monday. Unidentified men dumped the shipment in a village in the town.

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'Crising' weakens, spares Eastern Visayas

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Tropical depression "Crising" weakened into an active low pressure, sparing Eastern Visayas.

Weather forecaster Bonifacio Puring of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa)-Tacloban said that at 11 a.m. yesterday, Crising was estimated to be at 210 km east of Surigao with peak winds of 30 km per hour near the center.

However, Puring told the INQUIRER that the weather disturbance could still bring moderate to heavy rains to some parts of Eastern Visayas and Northern Mindanao.

The Office of Civil Defense ordered the immediate activation of all disaster coordinating councils in the entire region.

Franklin Robedizo, information officer of Eastern Samar, said Gov. Ben Evardone, chair of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, immediately convened the body.

Fuego said they came up with a series of training sessions involving the region's local chief executives.

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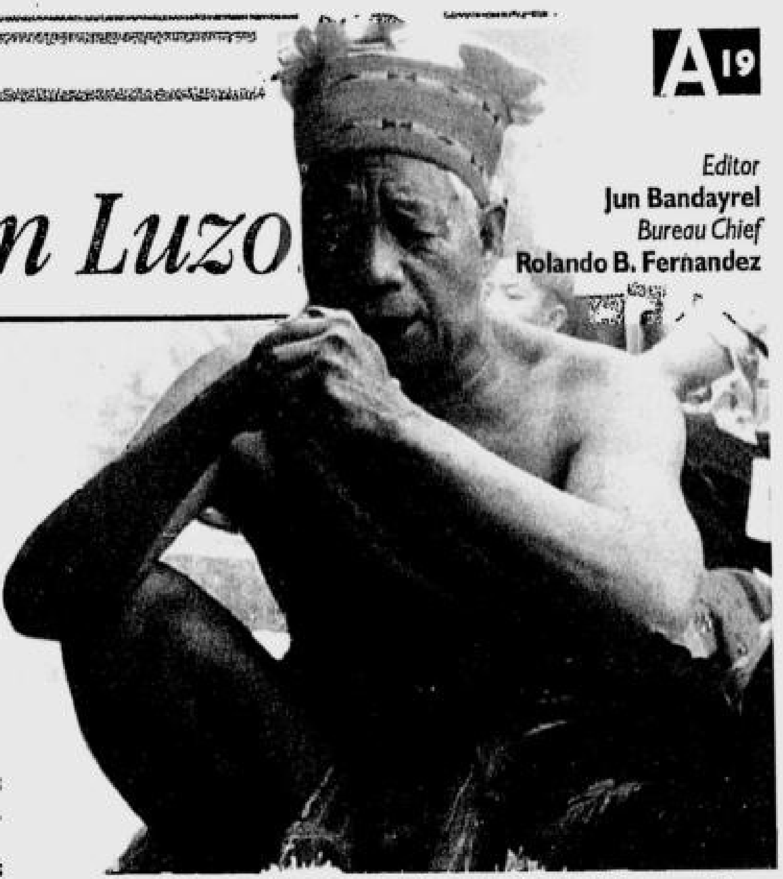
Bad rituals blamed for poverty in Ifugao



"MUMBAKI" Juan Candelario, 73, chants the "alim" (Ifugao epic) during the celebration of the 8th Imbayah festival in Banaue, Ifugao.

EV ESPIRITU

By Edgardo Espiritu
Banaue, Ifugao

THE NEIGHBORHOOD "*mumbaki*" (ritual priest) insists that Ifugao remains the country's fourth poorest province because it no longer takes its spiritual obligations seriously.

The *mumbaki* have been forced to use "shortcuts" in performing community rituals due to the bad economy, and these have often brought misfortunes to the villages, said Juan Candelario, 73, who served as *mumbaki* for the 8th Imbayah Festival in Banaue town last month.

The villagers expect many of the rituals to bring them good luck and they hope that ancestral spirits can help them earn more for the year, said Candelario.

But the more shortcuts they take, the more miseries the community suffer and "the poorer they become," he said.

Government economists rank Ifugao among the poorest provinces in the country because of its slow economic growth and unmanageable terrain. Poverty incidence in 2000 was 55.6 percent, the highest in the Cordillera Administrative Region and the fourth poorest in the country (next to Sulu, Masbate and Tawi-Tawi.)

Ifugao is "the lowest growth area in the Cordillera," said Leon Dacanay, acting regional director of the National Economic and Development Authority. Banaue residents earn an average income of P11,300 yearly, way below Benguet's average of P27,735.

Ifugao's human development index has been consistently low since 1994. It read 0.461 in 2000, placing the province among the Bottom 7 in the country.

The provincial government is putting up mini hydroelectric plants funded by Japanese investors, hoping to derive revenues from power generation, Dacanay said.

VITAL SIGNS

IFUGAO
Area: 2,628.2 sq.km
Total population: 161,623*
Average annual population growth rate (2000-05): 2.03
Average household size: 5.15*
Average annual family income (2000): P85,245
Average annual family expenditure (2000): P66,284
Annual per capita poverty threshold (2002): P12,359
Annual per capita food threshold (2002): P8,859
Labor force: 106,000**
Unemployment rate: 9.2%**
Underemployment rate: 17.7%**
Functional literacy rate (2000): 51.07%
*As of May 2000
**As of April 2003
Source: NSCB
PDI Research

Ironic

This is ironic, considering Ifugao's vast tourism potential for hosting the oldest rice terraces, which have been inscribed by the World Heritage Foundation.

Investments in hotels and inns are veering toward towns with rice terraces, Dacanay said.

A board member of the Philippine Tourism Authority said tour activities had so far been brisk this year, indicating "some improvement in Ifugao tourism." But he lamented that tourists were only present four months in a year, barely sustaining communities that depend only on tourism for their economy.

The provincial government's efforts to boost tourism through festivals have yet to bear fruit due to the lack of planning, a local tourism officer said.

Candelario concurs, but for far more tangible reasons.

Many rituals like the *imbayah* are cyclical and thus mandatory. The *Imbayah* is a festival of the *kadangyan* (rich) and has been pushed for the past eight years as a tourist extravaganza for the home of the rice terraces.

Increasing poverty

But if people don't invest in the rituals that will help them change their luck, their poverty increases geometrically, Candelario said.

The feast requires rich families to share their wealth so that it would grow tenfold. The rich family must prepare huge volumes of rice wine, which will be served to the community after the *mumbaki* have implored blessings from the *manungan* (god).

Candelario said the local government could only provide two of the required five pigs, half-filled cages of chicken instead of five full cages, and two carabaos. All 19 barangays of Banaue share the sacrifices.

"If they could not provide all the animals, they should not have proceeded with the festival," he said in the native Tuwali tongue.

"The people sponsoring this feast will suffer. They may get sick or they will lose their fortunes, if we scrimp on the ingredients," Candelario warned.

"Because I could not offer the gods everything, I will have to go and sacrifice 10 more chickens to *manungan* when I go home to avoid bad luck," he added.

Rituals have been the practiced haphazardly for the last three years, Candelario claimed, but people themselves contribute to the breakdown of festival activities.

For instance, Candelario said he needed two sacrificial pigs to perform the cleansing ritual called the *ahiw* because storm rains poured over the Imbayah festival on April 28. Rains are bad omens, he said.

The pig heads would be displayed at his *bale* (hut) during the ritual. But the heads were stolen—apparently by a hungry family.

With a report from Vincent Cabreza

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Poor demand access to Naga waste dump

NAGA CITY—Some 70 scavenging families barricaded this city's dump yesterday to pressure the local government unit here to at least provide them three trucks of garbage a day for their daily subsistence.

But the city government stood pat on its ground by prohibiting the entry of the scavengers into the dump that processes some 60 tons of garbage daily.

In a text message sent to the INQUIRER, Mayor Jesse Robredo said the scavengers had originally requested one truck a day, which he had granted.

Robredo said he had also ordered the scavengers to surrender and change their ID cards because, he said, some had been tampered with.

Ester Note, 60, leader of the scavengers, said they had no problem with the change of ID but they were protesting Robredo's decision to disallow them from scavenging inside the dump, which started on Monday.

Note said the prohibition had been ordered to favor a private company that the city government contracted to process and sell scrap from the dump.

She said the prohibition had been preceded by harassment when a SWAT team rushed to their residences on May 7 on reports that troublemakers were infiltrating their ranks.

Note said they were able to convince the SWAT team that there were no troublemakers among them.

Joel Martin, chief of the solid waste disposal department, said the processing and sale of scrap from the dump had been awarded to Lacto Pacific.

Martin said Lacto Pacific had been processing the garbage for two years now and had employed 44 persons, which included some of the scavengers.

Francisco Tiburcio, a scavenger who had been employed by Lacto Pacific, said the scavengers had already quit their jobs because, he claimed, they had been shortchanged by the company.

Tiburcio said they could earn more than an average of P4,340 a month if they were on their own.

He said the company paid them only on the basis of the total volume of scrap the scavengers gather which the company sold to junk shops.

During the stand-off yesterday, Martin ordered the dumping of newly collected garbage in a place where the materials were bulldozed while the barricade in the main entrance continued.

"The three trucks of garbage could have settled everything if the city government had allowed us to scavenge. For two days now, we have no earnings...," said Note. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

4 dead in botched robbery in Batangas

CALAMBA CITY—An unidentified robber was gunned down by policemen after he stabbed dead three people in a botched robbery just before dawn yesterday inside a subdivision in Barangay Maraouy in Lipa City, Batangas.

Senior Supt. David Quimio, city police chief, identified the fatalities as Rodolfo Lunar, 65; his live-in partner Edith Tafalla, 39; and their housemaid Sophia Encarnado, 21.

Quimio said the still unidentified suspect was shot dead by policemen.

He said Tafalla's son, Dantes, 17, and daughter, Judith, 10, survived the attack after they escaped to seek the help of neighbors who, in turn, called for police assistance.

Quimio said the robber entered the victims' house in Levi Town Subdivision through the front door at around 5 a.m.

The robber first stabbed Encarnado and then the couple when they came out of their room to check the commotion.

The robber hid in the ceiling and resisted arrest, prompting police to shoot him.

Police said they were curious how the robber was able to enter the house through the front door. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Slain cop hero promoted

BUGUEY, Cagayan—Police chief Director General Arturo Lomibao, on Sunday promoted a policeman here who was slain while fighting off bus robbers along the North Luzon Expressway on May 9. The family of PO3 Rodel Villalon also received P82,000 from the Philippine National Police. Lomibao, in a brief eulogy, said Villalon sacrificed his life so others could be saved. He asked his fellow policemen to emulate Villalon's dedication to duty. Villalon, who was on his way to Metro Manila from Olongapo City, gunned down two bus robbers but a third suspect shot him dead. *Estanislao Caldez and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cops ordered sacked

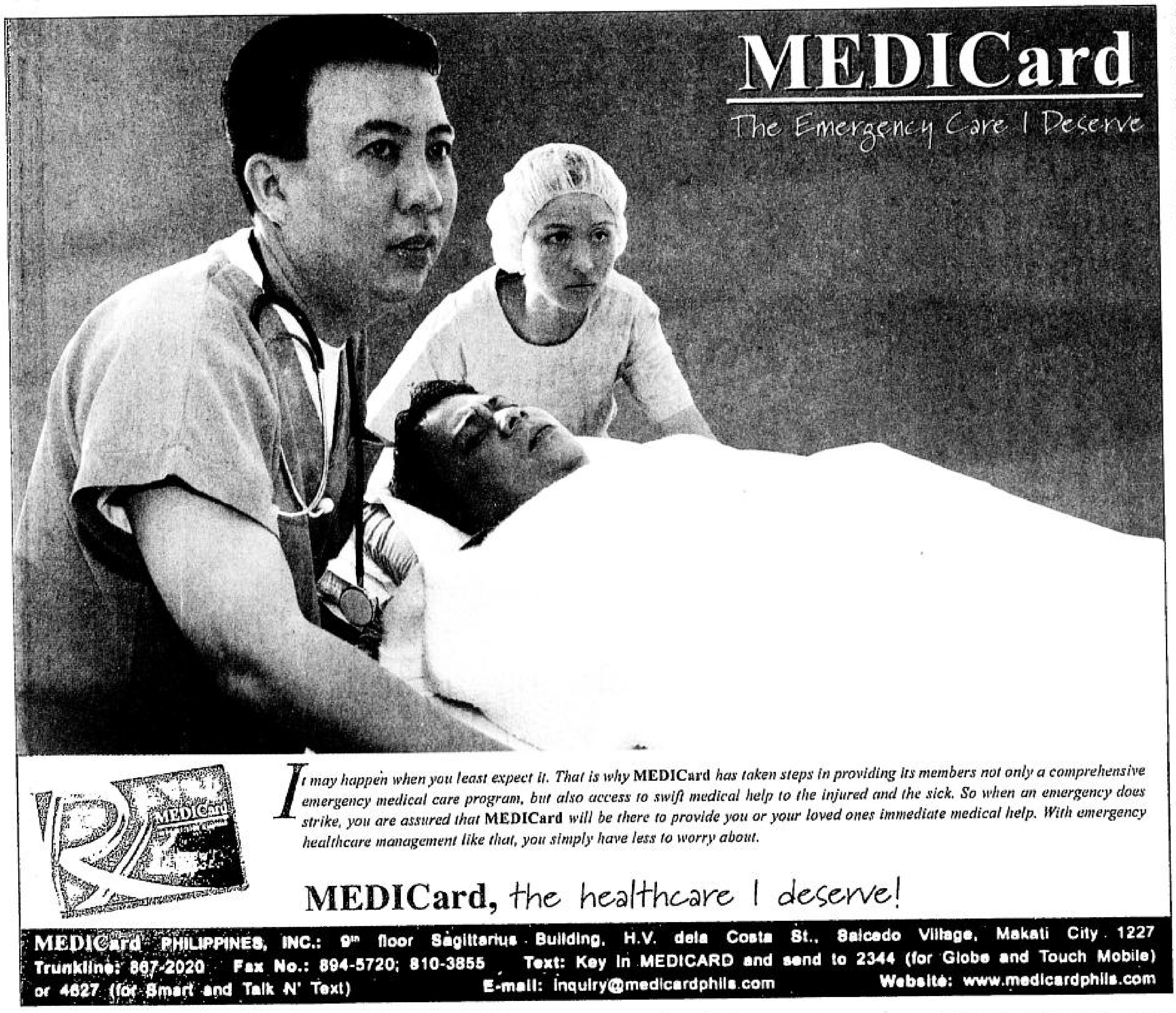
GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Ombudsman-Mindanao has ordered the dismissal from service of at least three policemen here, who were accused of a rubout about two years ago. In a recent order, the Ombudsman said it found SPO2 Rigby Malik, PO3 Romeo Carballe and PO2 Joel Cuyos guilty of killing a suspected car thief they were pursuing then. In their defense, the policemen said what took place was a legitimate encounter. SPO1 Sammy Lagura, former colleague of the three accused at the Fatima police station, said the three policemen were in Manila to follow up the reversal of the ruling. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Sipadan hostage takers

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The two Abu Sayyaf leaders killed with five other bandits in Patikul, Sulu on Saturday morning were involved in the Sipadan hostage crisis of 2000, the military said on Monday. Col. Juancho Sabban, commander of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said Mihadon Arok and Isah Sabri had acted as deputies for Radulan Sahiron. Sabban said the two bandit leaders were also responsible for kidnappings that had local businessmen for targets and made about P1.3 million from ransom payments. The bandits were killed when Marines launched an operation to rescue businessman Renato Yanga. Yanga, a cousin of former Zamboanga City police director Supt. Mario Yanga was snatched from his store in Jolo in April. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Seed project inspires studes

NINE students from 27 elementary schools in Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija joined the poetry competition under the Give-A-Seed campaign of CE Casecnan Water and Energy Co. The campaign aims to inform children of the importance of trees in protecting the environment. Michelle Perez, 11, a pupil at the Cadaclan Pantabangan School in Nueva Ecija, won the grand prize, while Angelina Benigno, of Galintuja Elementary School, won second prize, and Jan Camille Merlales, of Napon-Napon Primary School, came in third. Some 7,000 elementary school children from the two provinces gathered 4,000 kgs of ipil-ipil and acacia seeds for planting in denuded mountains of the Casecnan watershed, according to a news release.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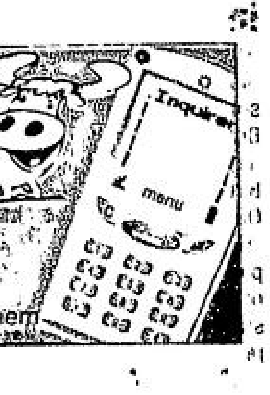

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Rizal landfill: Reopen or stay closed?

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Blanche S. Rivera

IF THE reopening of the San Mateo landfill pushes through, the site should serve as the garbage dump for the entire Rizal province, according to the provincial government.

San Mateo municipal secretary Rey Torrato had said the proposal to reopen the landfill was an effort to comply with Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act which provides that each local government unit should have its own landfill by next year.

The provincial government cited the same reason for reopening the landfill, but only if it is made available exclusively for Rizal province residents.

Reopening the San Mateo landfill would also be a necessity if the municipality wants a place to dump its waste, the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) said yesterday. The five controlled dumps serving Metro Manila—Payatas dump in Quezon City, Tanza dump in Navotas, Rodriguez dump in Rodriguez and two more dumps in Laguna—face closure in February next year.

The problem is, the Supreme Court had issued a temporary restraining order against the reopening of the 103-hectare landfill. The San Mateo local government had asked the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) about the possibility of reopening about 5.29 hectares of the landfill to accommodate local garbage. The MMDA is the operator of the landfill, which used to receive garbage from Metro Manila until the court closed it in 2000, following strong objections from affected residents.

But Mayor Pedro Cuerpo from neighboring Rodriguez (formerly Montalban) town reiterated his proposal for San Mateo to dump its garbage on the facility in his town, now the destination for the 1,500 tons of daily garbage from at least nine cities and towns in Metro Manila. However, this load is still way below the actual capacity of 2,500 tons of garbage every day, and not maximizing its use could mean its closure.

NSWMC executive director Albert Magalang said it would be better if San Mateo could have its own landfill before the present dumps stop operating. "The landfill's service life has not yet been maximized," he said, adding that it could be used for another two years. However, the NSWMC must first reassess the facility to determine its capacity to receive waste, Magalang added. *With Miko Morelos, trainee*

Forbes Park guards catch 14-foot python

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SLOWED down by the super-sized meal it just had, a 14-foot python was caught inside ritzy Forbes Park Saturday morning.

The snake tried to slither across a wall before sliding down and resting in the garden of the International Montessori School at No. 4 Ipil Place, South Forbes Park.

Three village security guards managed to capture the snake, which they then slid into a sack.

"We were told that this type of snake was very dangerous, not the kind that you could keep at home as a pet because it grows up to 35 feet," said Forbes Park security officer Ronnie Amis.

From the time it was caught at 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, the python has been locked up in a dog cage at the village security office.

Amis said the snake's stomach bulged with its last meal. Security guards believe it had ingested a dog.

"They thought it could have been a rabbit because a pet rabbit had been missing. But the pet was found. It apparently drowned in a pool," said Jose Concepcion, Barangay Forbes chair.

Forbes barangay and security officers could not yet confirm if the python had eaten a dog. Amis said there had been no reports of any dog missing in the village since they found the snake, the longest of six pythons caught in the village since January.

Concepcion said his office would contact the Quezon City Parks and Wildlife for advice on what should be done with the python and whether or not it could take custody of the snake.

Get NBI clearance in a jiffy from mobile vans in key areas

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WHEN Pacita Caronan heard that a special team from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) was going to Antipolo City to issue clearances yesterday, she was overjoyed.

Her 18-year-old daughter Maricris needed an NBI clearance for local employment, and accompanying her to the NBI's clearance processing office in Carriedo Plaza Mall in Quiapo, Manila, would only cost her time and money.

"I was relieved when I heard that instead of traveling to Manila and spending over a hundred pesos, the NBI would come to our place to issue my daughter's clearance," said Caronan, a resident of Barangay Sta. Cruz in Antipolo City.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said that the NBI Clearance on Wheels project entailed the deployment of vans to far-flung regions of the country, where special teams would renew or issue new clearances to residents.

"I found out that it took people from places like Puerto Princesa City in Palawan at least 30 to 45 days to obtain clearances," Wycoco said.

After transferring their clearance processing office to the air-conditioned Carriedo Mall from the bureau's cramped headquarters on Taft Avenue, and placing NBI kiosks in selected malls, the agency thought of sending well-equipped vans to remote areas.

Wycoco said the project is part of the bureau's initiative to make the services of the NBI as accessible and as convenient as possible, and create an efficient system that would eventually eliminate graft and corruption.

The project also aims at decentralizing the paper work at the NBI's main office and other regional and satellite offices, with five vans to be deployed in Luzon, two in the Visayas, and another three in Mindanao for the purpose.

"It would only take applicants three minutes to get their clearances," said Jose Avedillo, vice president of Mega Data Corp. which would provide technical support and facilities to the NBI project.

METROBRIEFS

Violinist complains against mentor

A YOUNG, aspiring violinist lodged a child-abuse complaint yesterday against her instructor who allegedly kissed her on the cheeks and lips. The 16-year-old complainant accused the violin instructor of making inappropriate advances on her last May 7 inside a talent center in Novaliches, Quezon City. The girl said her mentor put his arms around her and kissed her on the cheeks and lips in the middle of music practice. *DJ Yap*

Two cops get death for murder

TWO OF six Valenzuela policemen tagged in the killing of their colleague in 1996 were meted the death penalty yesterday. In his 46-page decision, Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 11 Judge Luis Arranz imposed the death sentence on SPO1 Alfredo Alawig and SPO2 Enrique Dabu as principals in the killing of PO3 Miel de Ocampo Cafe on Nov. 30, 1996. *Tina G. Santos*

Emily's art

"BREAKTHROUGHS by Emily," a collection of oil paintings by Emily Laygo, will be on exhibit tomorrow at Freedom Bar at the second floor of Anonas Commercial Complex, Anonas Street, Project 3, Quezon City. Powerspeak president Joey Reyes will open the exhibit scheduled at 7 p.m.

A starry night in Makati

RICO Puno, Hadji Alejandro, Marco Sison and Rey Valera, together with songstress Tosca Puno and The Brothers, will make it a starry, starry night during the "Handog ni Mayor Binay" show at 6 p.m., Friday, at the Quadrangle of Makati City Hall. The "Handog ni Mayor Binay" show is part of the month-long celebration of the Makati Foundation Day. The show is free to all employees and residents of Makati.

'Jueteng' crackdown all for show, says Malabon mayor

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Fran Katigbak

JUST for show.

That is how Malabon Mayor Canuto Oreta sees the crackdown on illegal gambling being undertaken by police.

"*May nahuhuli pero parang lokohan* (Some people are arrested but the arrests seem bogus)," Oreta said as he admitted that "jueteng," an illegal numbers game, was operating in Malabon.

But he added that the local government was helpless in curbing the problem because law enforcers were not serious in apprehending violators.

Oreta said he had been telling police officials to arrest illegal gambling operators in the city, but to no avail.

The INQUIRER called up Malabon police director Supt. Moises Guevarra for comment, but he did not answer his phone.

On the other hand, Northern Police District chief Senior Supt. Raul Gonzales insisted that there were no jueteng operations in the Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela areas.

A former member of the House of Representatives earlier said that mayors were among those on the take from jueteng.

Oreta denied that allegation.

Caloocan City Mayor Enrico Echiverri also denied the former congressman's allegations, but revealed that emissaries of gambling lords had approached him in behalf of the jueteng operators.

However, Echiverri refused to name the go-between, saying he barely knew him.

"I do not allow jueteng in the city and I don't receive any pay off," he said.

But for Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco, the congressman who refused to be identified should not be taken seriously.

"I do not receive any payola but would like the accuser to identify himself and stand by his word," Tiangco said.

According to Tiangco, it would be unfair to all mayors to react to an accusation made by someone who did not want to identify himself.

Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad, spokesperson for the Metro Manila Mayors' Council, said the allegations against mayors in Metro Manila were not true.

"How come they can't name the mayors who received jueteng money? Those [allegations] are rumors without any basis," he told the INQUIRER.

Trinidad added, "The mayors have better things to do than pay attention to such rumors."

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WEDNESDAY,
MAY 18, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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SPORTS TV

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs—Pacers vs Pistons, Game 5; 7 a.m.; Solar Sports; Sonics vs Spurs, Game 5; 9:30 a.m.; Sports Plus—Detroit and San Antonio are back in the comforts of their home courts.

GOLF: LPGA Chick-Fil-A; 12:30 a.m.; ESPN—Check out the third round of the tournament won by Jennifer Rosales last year.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Compiled by L. Manguiat

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ASSEMBLY VERDICT

POC decides on BAP ban May 26

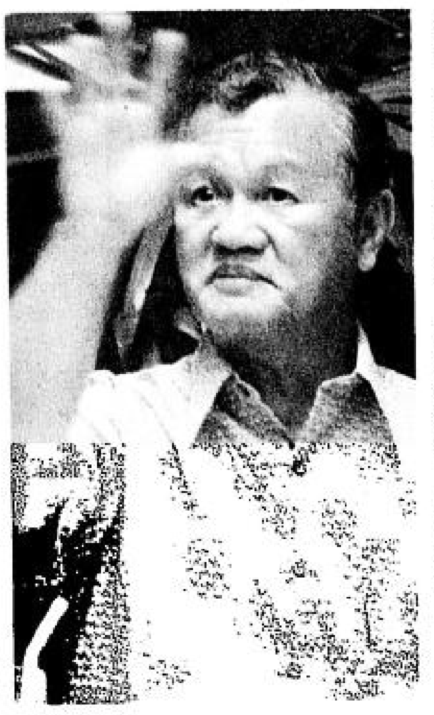
By Musong R. Castillo

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco will recommend the immediate suspension of the Basketball Association of the Philippines to the POC's general assembly for failing to "keep its word on fundamental agreements."

Cojuangco announced the unprecedented decision yesterday after what he said was a "careful and deliberate review" of the BAP's position on the formation of the national quintet to two international tournaments.

The former Tarlac congressman said the BAP had reneged on an earlier agreement with the POC-inspired basketball committee on the composition of the RP team.

He did not mince words in a broadside against BAP president Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal and secretary general Graham Lim.



COJUANGCO: BAP can't keep word on fundamental agreements. REM ZAMORA

Non-Filipino sec-gen

"[The] BAP has a president who cannot carry out his functions due to illness and a secretary-general who is non-Filipino and therefore could not relate to the national sentiment on a sport that has shown, on many occasions, the capacity to unite our people," said Cojuangco.

Calling his action "fair," the POC head reminded the BAP "not to nurture fears because it will be judged by a jury of its own peers."

The fate of the governing body for the country's national sport will be decided during the POC general assembly on May 25.

If Cojuangco gets a two-thirds vote from the 39-member body, or 26, the BAP will lose all its rights as a duly-recognized national sports association.

Asked if he has the numbers at this point, Cojuangco gave a wry smile and said that the expanded executive committee alone—which gave him full backing last week on the BAP row—is composed of 20 members.

"The BAP cannot accuse the POC of high-handedness because sincere efforts were made to reason with its officials," said Cojuangco, who was joined in the press briefing by POC chair Robert Aventajado.

"It is unfortunate that the BAP could not keep its word on fundamental agreements," Cojuangco added. "That shows glaring lack of character."

Gain attention

Cojuangco also lashed out at BAP legal counsel and spokesperson Bonifacio Alentajan. He said the lawyer "mindlessly overstepped the bounds of professionalism in a bid to gain public attention."

Alentajan hit out at Cojuangco over the weekend, calling him power-mad.

"This is tyranny at its best," Alentajan was quoted by a reporter as saying after receiving the letter informing BAP of Cojuangco's decision.

Officials of the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) were also furnished copies of the decision.

Cojuangco said the POC is also considering other sanctions against the BAP.

Sport damaged

"The country's image in basketball has inarguably suffered for many years," he said. "We maintain that this self-interest-based leadership seriously damages the sport that used to generate immense national pride."

Cojuangco said that once the general assembly votes for the BAP's suspension, he would propose that the original setup—agreed upon in the two basketball summits that led to the creation of the basketball committee—be enforced.

Those basketball summits, where the BAP was represented by vice president Christian Tan, Alentajan and director Lito Alvarez, named coach Chot Reyes of the ABC-bound RP five in charge of the selection and formation of the strongest possible national team for the Southeast Asian Games Basketball Association tournament next month and the SEA Games in November.

Team shamed

The POC stepped in when the national team the BAP formed last February with Boyzie Zamar as coach was shamed by a selection of movie actors and former pros in a minor tournament.

The players were later included in the national pool along with the ABC-bound candidates from the PBA and several stars from the PBL in one of the key points approved by the basketball committee.

But the BAP, claiming it was being left out in the process of forming the new RP team, announced after a board meeting that it had decided to stick to its original squad for the Seaba with Zamar as coach.

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P'masters drub Jewels, tighten race for semis

By Jasmine W. Payo

WITH Fil-Am star Anthony Washington showing his flashy form, Welcoat Paints denied Montaña Pawnshop an outright semifinal berth with an 81-74 victory in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the JCSGO Gym in Cubao.

Washington recovered from two straight subpar performances with 27 points and 10 rebounds to send the Paintmasters into a tight race with the Jewels, who surprisingly looked out of sync, and the Harbour Centre Portmasters for the two premium semifinal slots.

Earlier, Magnolia Ice Cream continued its resurgence by downing Granny Goose, 77-73, to remain in contention for the twice-to-beat advantage in the quarterfinals.

The defending champions, surprisingly struggling in this conference, came up with a balanced effort led by Neil Rañeses, who had 18 points, six rebounds and three blocks.

"It's a question of how much we want to win, if the team has the heart," said coach Koy Banal after the Wizards moved up to fifth place with a 5-5 slate. "It's good the team responded. Neil stepped up, but he has been giving us good numbers even in the early part of the tournament."

Welcoat opened the third quarter with 10 straight points, including back-to-back triples from Washington and Leo Najorda to peel away from a slim 37-36 halftime edge and post a 47-36 cushion.

Washington then drilled home eight of Welcoat's next 10 points to make it 57-43.

The Paintmasters then weathered a late Montaña rally led by Alex Compton to seal the victory.

The scores:

First game

MAGNOLIA 77—Rañeses 18, Santos 17, Miranda 14, Williams 13, Islp 5, Misolas 4, Calli 2, Rizada 2, Chan 2, Co 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 73—Quiñahan 17, Saladaga 10, Latonio 8, Lanete 7, Manalo 6, Santos 6, Alfad 5, Grijaldo 5, Guerrero 4, David 2, Ferrer 2, Cruz 1, Concha 0, Almeda 0.

Quarters:19-18, 42-36, 58-50, 77-73

Second game

WELCOAT 81—Washington 27, Ortiguerra 13, Najorda 13, Gamboa 8, Coching 5, Tan 5, Tangkay 4, Reyes 4, Dy 2, Orbeta 9, Guevarra 0, Junio 0.

MONTAÑA 74—Compton 24, Salvador 16, Juntilla 8, Espiritu 6, Capus 5, Bagulon 5, Dela Cuesta 5, Guerrero 3, Mercado 2, Vergara 0.

Quarters: 19-25, 37-36, 63-52, 81-74.

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Pacquiao fights champ Peden in September

PEDEN: 25 wins and two defeats.

RING Magazine featherweight king Manny Pacquiao shoots for the International Boxing Federation junior lightweight crown when he fights champion Robbie "Bomber" Peden of Australia in September, two months ahead of his much-awaited rematch with Erik Morales.

Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach, in an interview with boxing website Fightnews.com, confirmed reports that the Filipino ring icon will challenge Peden for the IBF title "sometime in September."

The venue of the proposed duel and the fighters' purses have not been set, although Roach said the bout will most likely happen in the United States, where Peden is based.

Pacquiao is currently ranked No. 6 by the IBF in its junior lightweight category, where the No. 1 and No. 2 spots are vacant.

The 31-year-old Peden (25-2, 14 KOs) won the IBF title with an eighth-round technical knockout of Nate Campbell last Feb. 23 in Melbourne, Australia.

Very much a "people's champion" among his fans in Australia, Peden was a two-time Olympian and a Commonwealth Games gold medalist in 1994.

His only two losses were in IBF eliminators to John Brown (130 lb) and Juan Manuel Marquez (126 lb).

Marquez pulled off a draw against Pacquiao, who knocked him down three times during their epic duel in May last year.

Pacquiao is using the fight against Peden as preparation for his rematch with World Boxing Council super feather champ Morales, possibly in December in the US.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

Pro-am kicks off 89th RP Open today

By Musong R. Castillo

LIPA CITY—Asia's oldest national golf championship officially gets off the ground today with the tournament's top stars headlining 40 teams seeing action in the Celebrity Pro-Am of the 89th Philippine Open at the Malarayat here.

The veritable who's who in government, sports and show business make up the amateur field, which will be joined by 40 top pros coming from the regular 156-player field in an 18-hole tournament.

A team will be made up of three amateurs and a pro with the amateurs to carry handicaps not exceeding 18. The best score in the flight on each hole will count for the team score.

Elegantly crafted trophies are at stake for the amateurs, while the professionals will chase cash prizes in the event co-presented by San Miguel Corp. and ICTSI.

Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, one day after handing down an earth-shaking decision on the Basketball Association of the Philippines, will hit one of the ceremonial drives before the 8:30 a.m., shotgun-style tee-off.

Former winner Ben Arda will also hit a ceremonial tee-off in the event also backed by Pagcor, PAL, Hanjin heavy industries and construction company limited, Aboitiz Group, Petron Blaze, PCSO, the Department of Tourism and Malarayat Hotel and Inn.

Home theater packages with 43-inch projection televisions, a computer, sports fans' and BMG energy saver showcases will be raffled off in the award rites to be held at the Malarayat Ballroom.

Malarayat chair Antonio Turalba Sr. will host the cocktails at the hotel Verandah, while Pinky Marquez and the Unforgettables will provide the entertainment numbers.

Omega is giving away a His & Hers pair of Constellation watches and is also a partner of the event like BMG Solar, Konica U-Bix, Human by Bench, Universal Robina Corp., Centennial Savings Bank, Patio Pacific of Boracay and Mizuno.

The Pro-Am will have players putting on relatively slow surfaces as the grounds crew of the Malarayat will trim the greens to super-fast level only in the first round tomorrow.

Thawom Wiratchant of Thailand and former winner Anthony Kang of the United States are the foreign players to watch in the $200,000 event proper that stakes $31,500 to the winner.

Angelo Que, an Asian Tour winner last year, and former champions Robert Pactolerin, Gerald Rosales and Cassius Casas loom as the biggest local hopes.

WITH the expected absence of Frankie Miñoza, Angelo Que (above) will spearhead the Filipino challenge in the RP Open. JESS YUSON

SPORTSWATCH

Host city boxers score

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Rookie Arthuro Rendoge and Lorenz Tesorio launched host Puerto Princesa's campaign on a bright note Monday in the 2005 National Youth and Women's Amateur Boxing Championships at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum. Rendoge scored a 12-5 win over Adwin Abawag of Samar in the boys' pinweight division while Tesorio routed Baguio City's Dexter Dulnuan, 15-1, in the kids' 28-kg class. Jeolan Bonghayong struck for defending champion Panabo City by stopping Marvin Antipuesto of Puerto Princesa in the boys' light mosquito category.

All Power Drag Racing set

THE ENEOS Lubricants All Power Drag Racing Championship 2005 unfolds this Saturday in Clark Field, Pampanga. Hundreds of drag racing enthusiasts are expected to join and display their wares in this year's hottest drag racing event sponsored by Eneos, Japan's leading lubricant. Bobby Tanyag, president of Eneos Philippine distributor Delta Japan Oil Products Corp. and AVP for sales and marketing Ferdinand Tarroza said cash prizes and trophies await the winners. For inquiries, call 0916-6471921, 759-2643 or e-mail: eneosrp@pldtdsl.net.

Global intercity caging up

WITH the elimination stage winding down, the First Global Destiny Basketball League now gears up for the intercity stage set to unfurl next month. Philip Chien, Global Destiny CEO and president, said yesterday he was pleased with the way the cable TV giant's initial venture into grassroots sports has been going. "The youth in the areas that Global Destiny serves now have a vehicle for health, fitness and sports to keep them away from harmful vices like drugs," said Chien. The event is endorsed by the Philippine Sports Commission, National Youth Commission and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. The top teams in each of the 10 cities and towns advance to the intercity stage of the event backed by Solid Video Corp., Sony Philippines and MyDestiny Cable Internet.

GCAP final round tonight

THE CHAMPIONSHIP round of the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines 7-Cock Derby gets going at 7 tonight at the Las Pinas Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. Three entries—MGM Milky Wing Strike of Tony Marfori, Winning Time Jobo Makati June 8 of Lito Orillaza and Sabong Pinoy Live of Patrick Antonio—led the field with three wins each Monday night. The GCAP executive committee announced yesterday that the Grand Championship 5-Cock Derby will be staged on May 23 to determine the GCAP Cocker of the Year. For inquiries, call 873-1040, 874 -3910 or 0926-7450375.

Superfights get going at PCC

SOME 150 matches are lined up today as the Superfights 2-Cock Ulutan Fastest Win gets going at the Pasay City Cockpit at 7 a.m. Sponsors are Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B- 50 Forten. For an entry fee of P2,200, the guaranteed prize is P500,000. The first champion (two points) will get P30,000; second, P20,000; third, P15,000; fourth, P12,000 and fifth, P10,000. The following bonuses await the fastest win awardees, according to pit manager Eric dela Rosa. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Air Assault features 70 tiffs

ROLIGON Mega Cockpit's Air Assault 6-Cock Derby enters its championship round today with more than 70 fights on tap. The first fight is set at 6 p.m. After two days of eliminations, only five entries remained unbeaten, each with three points. These were Tata Rey Masbate of Rey Briones, BJ Sniper Hatawan of Boy Jalandoni, DSL of Danny Santos, Maasin Leyte Concierto of Mayor Mercado and ED Summerheat of Erwin Diamante. Eight more participants from Davao and Negros will field six cocks each today, according to Choy Ampil, who is one of the derby hosts. For inquiries, call 833-2275,833-1638 and 852-9812.

Mon, Alvin headline GG rosters

By Francis Ochoa

FERNANDEZ

PATRIMONIO

FOR A while, Ramon Fernandez had everybody involved in a planned exhibition match holding their breaths when he told a major daily in Cebu that he might not show up for the game.

And then an old rival made him the first pick and everything changed.

"If that's the case, I'm going to play," Fernandez said in Cebuano.

That paved the way for the third installment of a partnership that already produced two of basketball's unforgettable moments.

In 1989, Fernandez and Robert Jaworski teamed up for the winning play in an all-star game. Last year, they provided the highlight of a blockbuster reunion game.

This year, Jaworski hopes to create one more magical moment with Fernandez by selecting the 6-foot-4 versatile center No. 1 during yesterday's drafting for the Greatest Game.

"I'm really thankful for Sonny's decision," Fernandez said. "Even if it's only for a few minutes, I'll try to play."

"I'm delighted with the news," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala, who had been awaiting Fernandez's commitment to the event. "Mon will surely add more glamour to the event."

Fernandez had earlier said he might miss the May 28 exhibition match at the Araneta Coliseum because of his business commitments in Cebu.

"It's [also] hard to play when you're not in good physical condition," Fernandez told the Cebu Daily News in an exclusive interview Monday.

Jaworski and Fernandez will lead the TM Greats Team while the TM Legends Team, coached by fabled Crispa mentor Baby Dalupan, used its first pick on Alvin Patrimonio. Fernandez and Patrimonio are the only players to win the Most Valuable Player trophy four times.

Jaworski and Fernandez started out as teammates, became fierce rivals who treated each other with passionate contempt, before teaming up in that 1989 all-star game, where Jaworski fed Fernandez for the game-winning shot.

Last year, during the Toyota-Crispa reunion match, Fernandez dished off to Jaworski for the crucial three-pointer.

The complete lineups:

TM GREATS—Ramon Fernandez, Francis Arnaiz, Danny Florencio, Johnny Abarrientos, Kenneth Duremdes, Manny Paner, Lim Eng Beng, Benjie Paras, Samboy Lim, Ato Agustin and Ronnie Magsanoc. Coach: Robert Jaworski

TM LEGENDS—Alvin Patrimonio, William Adornado, Atoy Co, Freddie Hubalde, Philip Cezar, Jerry Codinera, Allan Caidic, Jojo Lastimosa, Vergel Meneses and Hector Calma. Coach: Baby Dalupan

350 players gun for ace in Forest Hills Invt'l today

A FIELD of 350 players is expected to shoot for the ace when the four-day Forest Hills Invitational fires off starting today at the Jack Nicklaus course in Antipolo City.

Organizers said a Hyundai Getz car, a Combo Nike golf set, a Wilson golf set and a Club Car golf car are at stake as holes-in-one prizes in all par-3s.

"It's all systems go," said Victor de Guzman, chair of Forest Hills' sports and games committee.

Pacsports, Sun Cellular, Golforce Inc. and Hyundai-E. Rodriguez Sr./Wheels Distributor are presenting this year's affair.

The guest partner gets whatever the member wins during the raffle, said De Guzman said.

The grand raffle prize is another Hyundai Getz, which only lucky player wins. His partner automatically gets a 43-inch projection TV.

The tournament also has Turf Company and Citibank as major sponsors.

NOT a safe ballgame for this non-gov't man

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

IT'S a noble trait to be tolerant, said a late American poet. To try and be patient is the highest kind of imagination, the poet added.

But there are moral limits to empathy.

We say this because we suspect the fumbles being committed by the First Gentleman, Mike Arroyo, are being influenced by the style and thinking of his lawyer, Jesus Santos.

Take the lawyer's dogged defense of his master in the case of the MGM Las Vegas villa, where Mr. Arroyo stayed during Manny Pacquiao's fight against Mexican Erik Morales last March.

Santos gladly stepped out of bounds in his snarling concern to make his master appear noble and pure.

Of course, we had to remind Mr. Arroyo that, contrary to his claim, he did not stay in a mere suite but in an exclusive villa.

***

We also set the record straight by quoting the actual villa rates, without going hard on the First Gentleman who explained that his stay at MGM Grand was free, and came in the form of a gift.

Actually, we had considered the case closed. But Santos would neither be appeased nor convinced by facts we had presented.

In a blazing defense, lawyer Santos said the First Gentleman was not a public official and should not be criticized as such.

The lawyer, in driving home his point, actually used vulgar language that we didn't find fit to print.

The lawyer's stand was blindly self-serving.

Why? Because it was Mike Arroyo himself who had candidly stated that he was given the complimentary accommodation at the expensive villa because of his stature.

Mike Arroyo still officially sleeps with Her Excellency, the President of the Philippines.

In this lawyer's book, it's perfectly right for the husband of the President to receive expensive gifts—because he's not (officially) a public servant.

If we follow this thinking, it should no longer come as a surprise if our countrymen totally lose whatever little respect they have left for the Office of the President.

They are free to play whatever games they like, but there are unwritten rules on morals and decency that bind the President and immediate members of her family.

It's the duty of his lawyer to assess his master on this, if the First Gentleman is not aware of this code.

***

So sorry for having allowed this case to drag this far.

But, in case the deeper details of the issue continue to elude him, we would like to invite lawyer Santos to read Federico Pascual's Postscript column in the Star last Sunday, Mary 15.

Here's a portion of that column wherein Pascual quoted reader Luge Bago: "Mike Arroyo is not being entirely candid about his Las Vegas accommodation in March 2005. He's wrong in saying that $6,000 is the most expensive accommodation the MGM has. It is, at the very least, $15,000, as the MGM Grand website states."

Continued the column: "Mike Arroyo was quoted as telling the press, 'I challenge them, anyone of them. If they can find a room in Las Vegas that's $20,000 (per night) I'll cut off my balls.' Well, Luge Bago retorted: 'Since $15,000 is closer to $20,000 than his $6,000, then he should just have one ball cut off. If Mike Arroyo can't disappear entirely, then for the moment maybe we can at least be rid of one of his balls.'"

Sorry about that. But it appears the First Gentleman, bless his anatomy, is not totally safe in this unique ballgame he has dared play.

INQBOX
Question of the Week
More than 90 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to stop the killings?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! U
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PBA star no match for action star

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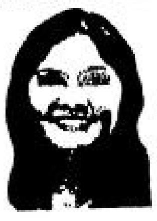


Beth Celis

UNLIKE in the May 6 PBA board meeting where tempers flared, blood pressures rose and voices soared, last Monday's session was relatively calm, although the discussions continued to be a bit heated.

Tackled at length was the pressing Fil-Am issue, with the governors eventually concurring to give a 90-day period for entertaining questions and protests. The countdown starts after a suspended Fil-Am cager has submitted all the required documents. Should there be no objections after the 90-day period, the case is closed with finality and the suspension is lifted.

* * *

Word is out that the POC plans to install the "basketball committee," composed of the country's major basketball stakeholders, as the Philippines' highest basketball governing body, a system patterned after USA Basketball.

Question is, will the POC succeed in easing out the BAP which is duly recognized by the FIBA?

So far, many have tried, but none has triumphed.

* * *

Fearless and fabulous Mark Cardona of Harbour Centre currently leads the PBL not only in most points scored but also in most stitches incurred from various injuries.

At the rate his face and head are being embroidered with stitches, MacMac may turn into a Frankenstein even before he makes his debut in the PBA.

"Imagine, only in this conference, MacMac incurred five stitches on the head, four in his upper lip, a black eye and a long scratch near his right eye, *pero leading pa rin siya sa* scoring. That means *walang takot, kahit tinitira parati ng kalaban*," said Harbour Centre team owner Mikee Romero.

Add two stitches on the right eyebrow, three on the left side and one on the chin to complete MacMac's career collection which, he says, he doesn't mind.

"*Alam ko naman na ini*-intimidate *lang nila ako. Magsasawa sila sa kakapanakit dahil hindi ako mapipikon, hinding-hindi ako gaganti. Ang hindi nila alam, lalo akong nasasaktan, lalo akong nagiging agresibo sa laro*," said the PBL's hottest cager today.

* * *

Going back to Mikee, he is is currently on vacation in the United States, but it seems that his PBL team is all he could think about even while there.

He calls Manila everyday during practice or before and after each game. A member of his staff, Eric Arriola, gives him a play-by-play account of the entire match. Mikee later turns to the Pumaren brothers, consultant Derrick and assistant team manager Dindo, for evaluation. Mikee spends a fortune on overseas phone calls, but he doesn't mind.

"It's the next best thing to being there. Of course, how I wish I were actually there. I am confident though, that our team is in good hands," Mikee said, as he drove from Los Angeles to San Francisco yesterday.

Even he could not believe that a team hastily formed in two weeks could do so well. "We're now number two in the PBL, that's something any team owner could be proud of. It's now the system working for us. Harbour is a completely different team from our first game," Mikee said.

Last I heard, Mikee was planning to cut short his vacation so he can head back home. No doubt he is looking forward to a Cinderella story for his team.

* * *

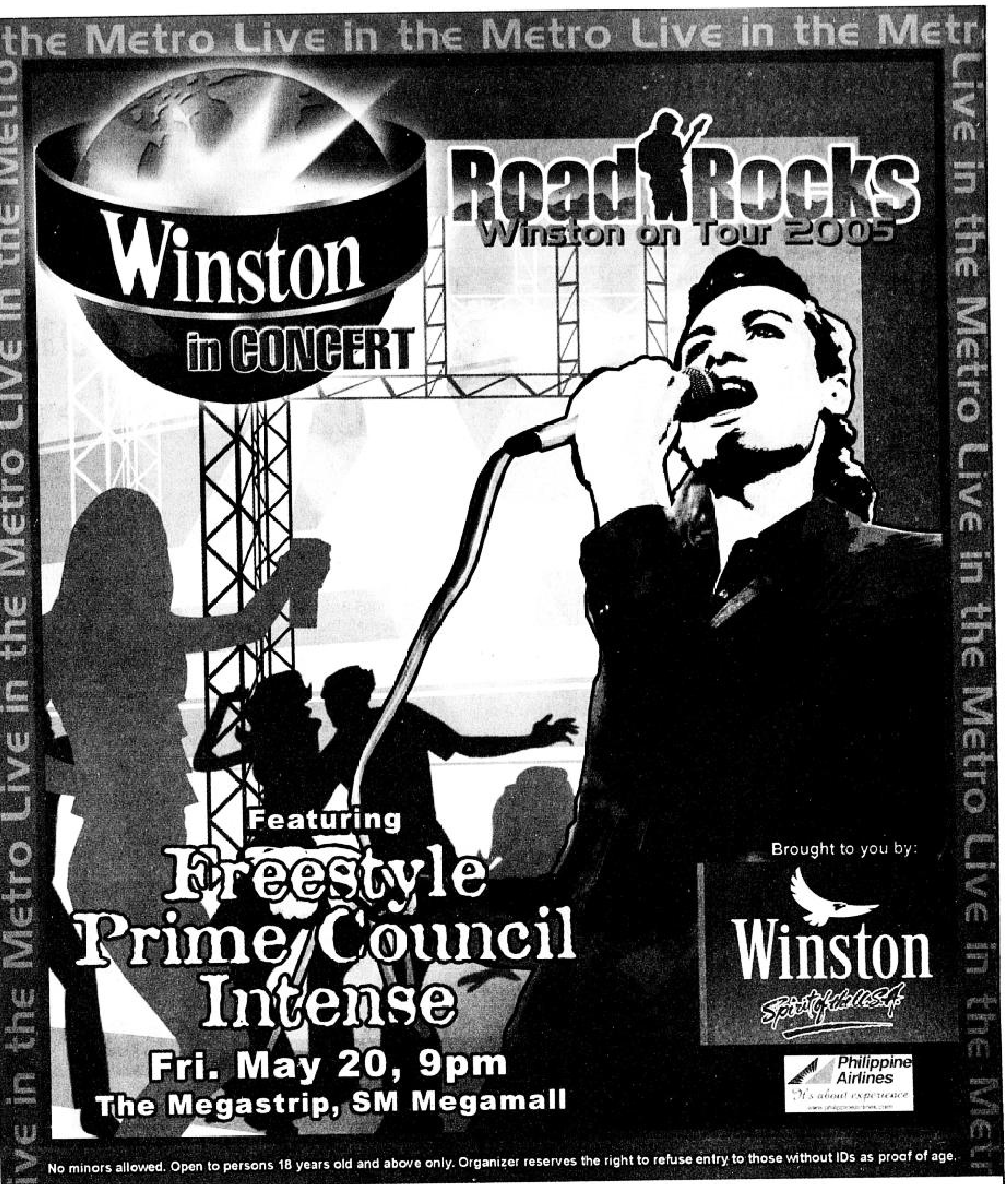
Derrick Pumaren, who sits as consultant for the University of the East Warriors and Harbour Centre, slipped quietly out of the country last week to personally look over an offer from Hassan Al Baharina to coach Al Ahli, the No. 1 commercial ballclub in Bahrain which Al Baharina owns.

Free housing, a monthly PBA-standard salary, car service and other perks go with the 10-month package that Derick might find too good to resist.

* * *

PBA fans have been calling our radio program "Usapang Sports" over dzME to confirm show biz reports that Fil-Am cager Rudy Hatfield and movie actress Rufa Mae Quinto had split. While I didn't have the answer then, I heard it straight from Rufa Mae on television the other day that she and Rudy had parted ways. This must have been pretty recent because just before Holy Week, some players saw the couple frolicking on the white sands of Boracay with Eric Menk, Benjie Paras' ex Jackie Forster and model Cindy Kurleto.

According to a PBA coach, Rudy has had a number of dangerous moments in this relationship, like that one time when a famous action star rival poked a gun on Rudy's temple because he would not quit knocking at his ladylove's shut condominium door. Rudy was outside the condo, the gun toter came from inside.



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Iloilo five's late burst zaps Zambo

DAPITAN CITY—The Iloilo Warriors turned back the Zamboanga del Norte Hornbills, 77-71, Monday night to break into the win column after three games in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national championship at the Cultural Center here.

Eileen Leonida, Edu Allado and Eldrin Senierez combined in a 7-1 finish to snap a 70-70 deadlock and hand the Warriors of IBL president Robert Uy their first road win.

With Mark Arepe leading the attack, the Hornbills of Gov. Rolando Yebes and Dapitan Mayor Dominador Jalosjos Jr. raced to a 14-4 lead. But the Warriors fought back to turn the game close until the final minutes.

Meanwhile, defending champion Tribu Sugbu opens its campaign against the unbeaten Ozamiz Cotta at 6 p.m. today at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym in Ozamiz City.

Over at the Tagaytay Sports Center in Cavite, Forward Taguig goes up against the Cavite Insurers at 5 p.m.

The scores:

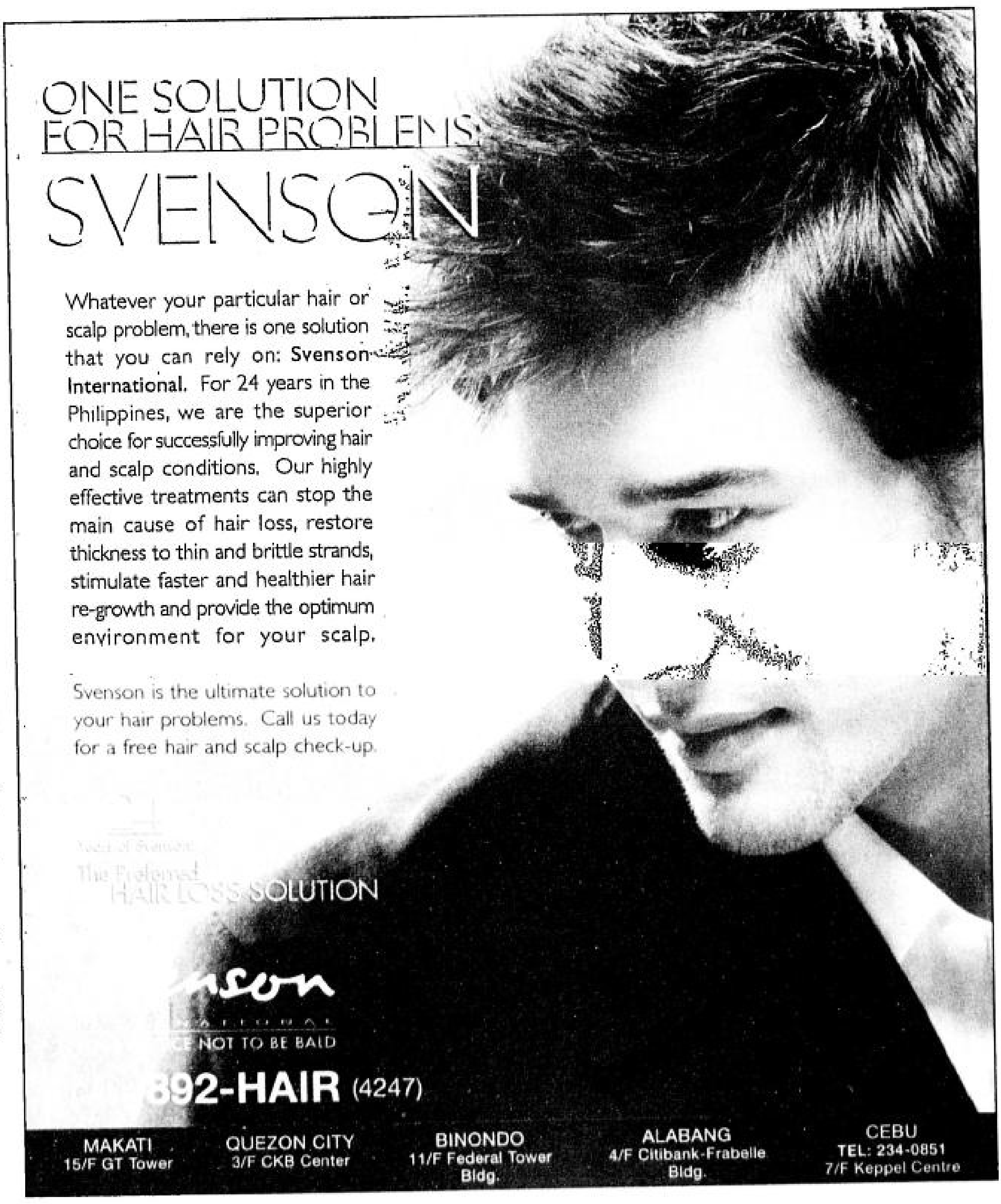
ILOILO 77—Senierez 22, Manuel 13, Allado 12, Leonida 9, Sina-on 5, Poral 3, Sencil 3, Jauco 3, Psluena 3, Arceno 2, Renesa 2, Lima 0, Evangelista 0, Parreno 0.

ZANORTE 71—Getubia 15, Damonsing 13, Apepe 12, Jaro 9, Dumapig 8, Arquero 6, Cularte 4, Neri 0.

Quarters: 17-22, 39-43, 63-59, 77-71

Karatekas off to Macau tilt

THE PHILIPPINE Karatedo Federation team left yesterday to vie in the 17th Asian Karatedo Federation Championships in Macau on May 18-22. The team members are Norman (Sonny) Montalvo, Gerardo Rodrigo Anonas, Rhodee Saavedra, Stephanie Carol Lim, Revie Sani and Melanie Perez. Montalvo, Anonas and Lim are from the Association for the Advancement of Karatedo (AAK), while Saavedra and Perez are from the Association of Shotokan Karatedo (ASK).



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Moment of truth for 3 NBA teams

WASHINGTON—Three favored NBA title contenders face their moments of truth this week in best-of-seven second-round playoff showdowns with stubborn rivals who refuse to step aside.

Defending champion Detroit, which needed a road victory to pull level at 2-2 with Indiana, must win at home Tuesday to have a chance of closing out the Pacers at Indianapolis on Thursday.

Whichever club emerges from that Eastern Conference duel must next face the rested Miami Heat, with Shaquille O'Neal likely to return from a bruised right thigh and combine with guard Dwyane Wade to ignite the flashy Heat attack.

The Western Conference has a pair of series deadlocked at 2-2 with Dallas at regular-season champion Phoenix for game five Wednesday and Seattle playing game five Tuesday at San Antonio.

NBA Most Valuable Player Steve Nash of Phoenix scored 48 points against his former teammates in a Sunday loss that allowed the Mavericks to pull even.

AFP

Murder suspect halts rumors

Lucero

Makati bar owner Cynthia Robles-Lucero has publicly admitted Monday to having an affair with one of her employees but requested the media not to link it with the murder of 28-year-old management executive Jerson Morales, a regular customer of the Purple Pear Bar owned by Lucero and where Morales was found shot to death last March 5.

In a press conference held at Purple Pear, Lucero said that she has already admitted to her husband, Eric Lucero, that she has had an illicit relationship with bartender Gian Carlo Enriquez. Lucero also told reporters that her husband and two children have left for the States last week and that she is set to follow her family to Los Angeles, California – where the Luceros have a home – soon.

"I, along with my family, have been through so much these past few months. It is our fervent hope that we are left to start a new life together in peace," Lucero said. The alleged Lucero-Enriquez affair, made even more controversial by the Morales murder connection, has been the subject of blind items and rumors going around in society circles.

Although Lucero, along with Enriquez, is being tagged as one of the suspects in the Morales murder, Supt. Leo Santiago of the Makati Criminal Investigation Division and head of Task Force Morales said, "There is no hold departure order issued against Ms. Lucero so we cannot prevent her from leaving. However, we are counting on her to further cooperate in the investigation and return to the country should the need arise."

This is an INQuest Adventure game clue

For previous chapters and clues, log on to www.inquestor.com

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Navy tandem rules Petron beach volley

ANGELES City—Philippine Navy's Michelle Laborte and Cecile Tabuena pulled off a 21-17, 21-14 victory over national team mainstays Monica Aleta and Joan Carpio to once again reign supreme in the 2005 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament at the Clearwater Country Club.

Scoring heavily with their well-timed spikes, Laborte and Tabuena survived the challenge of Aleta and Carpio to regain their lofty status in the Petron series after being swept aside by the Philippine Army champion team of Patricia Siatan and Jennifer Bohawe in the first leg.

"They (Aleta and Carpio) really came down to fight," said Laborte in Filipino. "Even the Bohawe-Siatan tandem was never this good when we beat them last year in the grand finals. I expect them to figure prominently again in the future."

The event is also backed by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Pagcor and Toyota Pasong Tamo. Speedo is the official outfitter while Mikasa is the official ball.

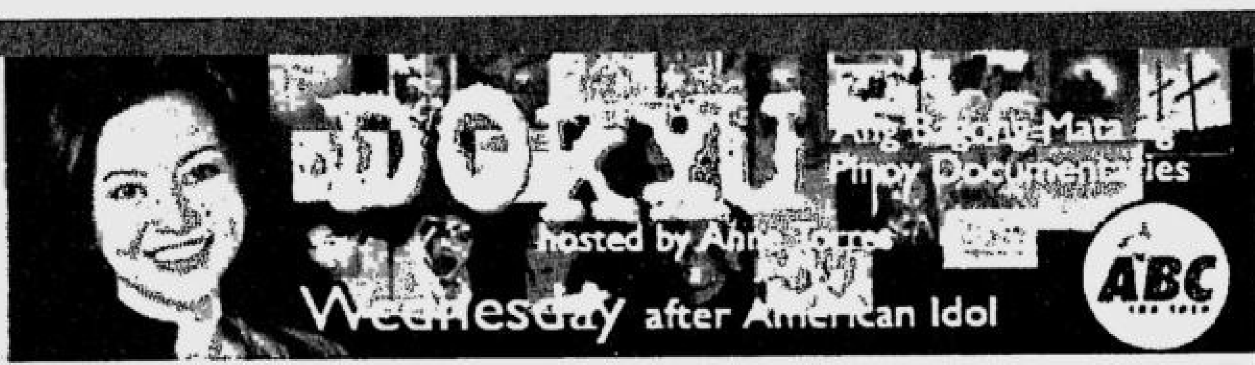
Laborte and Tabuena pocketed P10,000 for the title and advanced to the national finals in December, when the champions of the series' four legs gather to determine the year's beach volleyball queens.

The tall and pretty Aleta, a former mainstay of Far Eastern U volleyball team, and Carpio, who is formerly of the University of Sto. Tomas, actually caught Laborte and Tabuena flat-footed in the early goings. Two straight service winners by Carpio, coupled by three thunderous spikes by Aleta, gave the Nationals an 8-5 lead in the first set.

NAVY'S Michelle Laborte (right) spikes as Joan Carpio tries to block during the finals.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

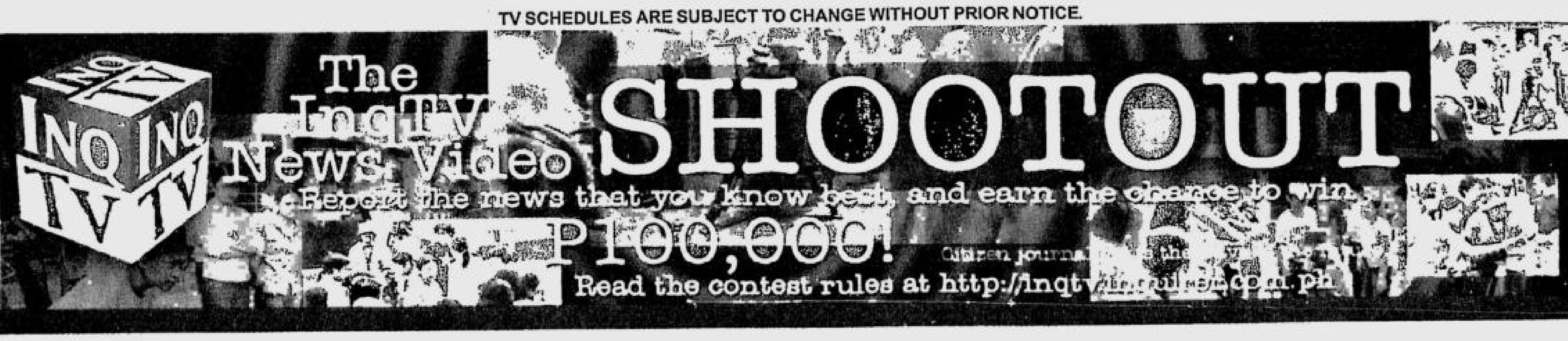
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Wednesday, May 18, 2005


DOKYU
Ang Bagong Mata ng Pinoy Documentaries
hosted by Anna Torres
Wednesday after American Idol
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	Opids	TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Hiram	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Yes Yes Show			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Look Who's Talking	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	Sweet Eighteen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM)		Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob		Tough Enough	7 Days		Trading Spouses		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Sagot Natin Kasama Si Joey Luna		Road Trip
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		On Air Tambayan		Direk	Junior Reyes Report	Bestfriends	Celebrity Single	Retro TV	IBC News Tonite	Breaking Barriers	
JackTV	Banzai	X-Men	Justice League	Wwe Raw				Filter	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Dr. Katz	Premium Blend	Chapelle's Show	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Mad TV		The Sib Show	Street Smarts
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Live!		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Simple Life	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Complete Savages	What I Like About You	Veronica Mars		Last Comic Standing		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Sala Sa Init, Sala Sa Lamig				Kahit Pader Gigiban Ko				Singles			Persona	Kakabakaba Ka Ba? (9:15 PM)				Kapusoi Ng Isang Awit	
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Super Gals	My MYX	Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	C.S.I.			Las Vegas		News Central	Oprah		The Good Life With Cory Quirino
AXN		The Amazing Race 7				Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		Extreme Variety		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: NY (Season I)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol		Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol		Chronicles: News From The Edge				Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Showreel Asia		Taboo		Dangerous Jobs		Egypt Detectives: Mystery of The Pharaoh's Stone	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Showreel Asia		Deep Jungle	
Solar Sports							ATP World Team C'ship '05						Sports Desk	NBA Playoffs Conf. Sfinals Game5					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special 101 Most Shocking Moments		You're Invited	Life & Style		Style Star	Nigella Bites II	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO			That Championship Season				Matchstick Men				Consequence			Escape From L.A.			Congo (10:40PM)		
Star Movies		Rising Sun (3:15 PM)				The Santa Clause				Underworld				The Assignment			Cave In (10:35PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN		2005 WPBA Carolina Classic		Motorsport Asia	Asian X Games VI Presented by Toyota		English Premier Football League 2004/05				Goals!	Sportscenter Asia	World Pool Trick Shot Masters '04				Soccer FIFA Fever	2004 Sprint-itational Table Tennis C'ships	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax	Combustion			Lover Come Back			Gotcha! (5:45 PM)				Tales From The Crypt Presents Bordello Of Blood (7:35 PM)			Simone				Avenging Angelo (10:55PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Missing		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	Hustle		Missing		The Blackwater Lightship			Strong Medicine (10:35PM)		Hustle (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Science Mysteries		Science Frontiers		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Pope John Paul II-Ambassador Of Peace		Vatican: Inside The Eternal City		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Hour Asia	
Sports Plus				This Is The PGA Tour		The Search TV	FMX		Monster Jam	NBA Playoffs Conf. Sfinals Game5					Bikini Destination	Arena Football Grand Rapids @ Chicago			

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.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VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: What would you like to say to your close friend, who is celebrating his birthday today?

Guest: I admire you for being so good as an actor, and as a friend. You cease to never amaze me!

(*Ay, baliktad!*)

* * *

Host: How does this giant ballroom work? How does it lift us up to float to different places?

Guest: It's an old principle that still works very well: it's the hot air that's rising us up!

(And you're getting a rise out of us...)

* * *

Quizmaster: Which two sides fought in the US Revolutionary War?

Contestant: Japan and Asia!

(Your answer is downright—revolutionary!)

* * *

Host: Is it true that, as an audience, Filipinos are among the most difficult to please?

Guest: Only at the start. But, if you're a good performer, you'll easily notice that, when they're already relaxed, Filipinos are no longer shy and even engage in all sorts of antiques!

(Antics *mo*, antiques *ko*!)

* * *

Host: How do we cook this beautiful and delicious dish that you have as the finished product here?

Guest: Don't worry, we will demonstrate all the necessary for the next steps what we do it!

(*Ano daw?!*)

* * *

Host: How did you capture the suspects after such a long time? What did it take?

Guest: It took a lot of work, of sleepless nights. We captured them only after a long observeillance!

(—combination of observation and surveillance, obviously!)

* * *

Host: How are you feeling these days? I hear you were in the hospital last month.

Guest: Yes, but only for check-up of my condition. It's ok now.

Host: You don't feel anything anymore?

Guest: Only a little soldier pains.

(Soldier pains? How—military!)

* * *

Host: Your house is the biggest one in your neighborhood, I hear.

Guest: Not really. *Marami lang ilaw ang aming* lights.

(So, that's why it's so bright!)

* * *

Host: What is the most valuable tree in the Philippines?

Guest: Of course, the coocoonut tree!

(Coo-rect!)

* * *

Host: Should a wife work outside the home or not? What if she wants to add to her family's income?

Guest: It depends on the situation of the family. It should be on a kiss-to-kiss basis!

(So the rule is: When in doubt, pucker up!)

* * *

Host: What started the big fire in your neighborhood?

Guest: There are different reports, but many say it started in a house where the electric fan, *nag*-overhot!

(*Ay, nag*-overhot!)

* * *

Host: So, what have you learned from this sad experience?

Guest: I've learned not to put so much importance on material things. It's an awaking for me!

(One man's awakening is another man's awaking?)

* * *

Host: It's the first birthday of your little *inaanak*. What do you want to say to her?

Guest: *Sana*, that she will be successful in all her endeavors!

(*Hoy, baby pa yung inaanak mo, 'no?* Relax, give her time to enjoy her childhood before nagging her about all of her "endeavors"!)

'Unsolved History: Ninjas'

ON May 23 at 8 p.m., Discovery Channel will telecast the one-hour special, "Unsolved History: Ninjas." It studies the stealthy and deadly skills of the celebrated martial arts fighters, and examines their exotic weapons and techniques, including remote viewing. With the help of modern-day ninja experts,

OBSERVEILLANCE/ A28

SHANG CINEPLEX

① KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (PG-13)
12:15, 3:20, 6:25 LMF
STAR WARS III (GP)
10:00 PM

② HOUSE OF WAX (R-13)
11:25, 2:00, 4:35, 7:10 LMF
STAR WARS III (GP)
11:00 PM

③ AMITYVILLE HORROR
MTRCB: R-13
11:55, 2:15, 4:35, 6:55, 9:15

④ IN GOOD COMPANY
MTRCB: PG-13
11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10

PREMIERE THEATRE
INTERPRETER (PG13) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20
STAR WARS III (GP) 10:30 PM

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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00, 2:00, 5:00
8:00, 11:00
PG-13

2 IN GOOD COMPANY
10:50, 1:35, 4:20
7:05
PG-13

3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:55, 3:20, 5:45
8:10
R-13

4 HOUSE OF WAX
(SNEAK PREVIEW)
12:30, 3:05, 5:40
8:15, 10:50
R-13

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AMITYVILLE HORROR R13 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:05	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 1:20 4:20 7:20 STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 11:30 PM	THE INTERPRETER PG13 11:45 2:15 4:45 7:15 STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 10:00 PM
HEAD IN THE CLOUDS R13 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45 STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 11:00 PM	IN GOOD COMPANY PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	HOUSE OF WAX R13 12:30,2:55,5:20,7:45 STAR WARS: EPISODE II GP 10:30 PM

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	4 Under Renovation	
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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN - 10:30, 1:25, 4:20 (PG13)
ADVANCE SCREENING
STARWARS III - 10PM (GP)

CINEMA 2
HOUSE OF WAX
11:35,2:10,4:45,7:20 -(R13)
ADVANCE SCREENING
STARWARS III
10:25 PM (GP)

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CINEMA 3
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STARWARS III - MAY 19
GP

CINEMA 4
COMING SOON
STARWARS III - MAY 19
GP

CINEMA 5
COMING SOON
STARWARS III - MAY 19
GP

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METRO MANILA

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1 THE INTERPRETER
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 IN GOOD COMPANY
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN / STAR WARS III
11 TRUMPETS
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city fairview
1 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
2 GUES WHO
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAHARA / STAR WARS III
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 THE PACIFIER
9 AMITYVILLE HORROR
10 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
11 ARE WE THERE YET
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city north edsa
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL / STAR WARS III
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 RESERVED
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 HOUSE OF WAX

sm city manila
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
6 GUESS WHO / STAR WARS III
7 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
8 THE WEDDING DATE
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 SAMARA : RING 2
11 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city sta. mesa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN / STAR WARS III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 IN GOOD COMPANY/ STAR WARS III
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 BIKINI OPEN
9 AMITYVILLE HORROR
10 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city bicutan
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN / STAR WARS III
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 HOUSE OF WAX / STAR WARS III

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 HOUSE OF WAX / STAR WARS III
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 BIKINI OPEN

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 SAHARA
2 GUESS WHO / STAR WARS III
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 BIKINI OPEN

sm city baguio
1 THE WEDDING DATE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 BOOGIEMAN / STAR WARS III

sm city batangas
1 THE PACIFIER
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 BOOGIE MAN / STAR WARS III
4 BIKINI OPEN

sm city marilao
1 SAHARA / STAR WARS III
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS / STAR WARS III

sm city bacoor
1 ANG LAGUSAN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL / STAR WARS III
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

sm city dasmariñas
1 BIKINI OPEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA / STAR WARS III

sm city lucena
1 ALONE IN THE DARK / STAR WARS III
2 THE PACIFIER
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 THE INTERPRETER / STAR WARS III
2 RESERVED
3 GUESS WHO
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 SIX
6 HONEY
7 BIKINI OPEN
8 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city iloilo
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 RESERVED
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 SAHARA
5 SIX / STAR WARS III
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 RESERVED
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city davao
1 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 GUESS WHO
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 THE INTERPRETER / STAR WARS III

sm city cagayan de oro
1 THE WEDDING DATE / STAR WARS III
2 BOOGIEMAN
3 SAHARA
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Are We THERE Yet?

Are We THERE Yet?

"S / He's Just a Kid! Really?!
Story-Telling Contest

We know how cute and fun-loving kids are. But we also know how naughty they are. Want to share your most Unforgettable moment with a kid? In not more than 300 words, tell us what this kid said or did to you.

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WAVE 89.1

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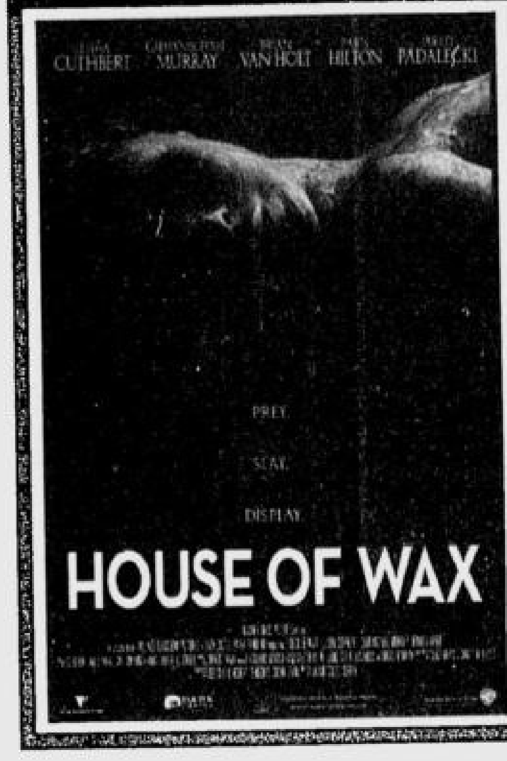
CUTHBERT MURRAY VAN HOLT HILTON PADALECKI
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SLAY.
DISPLAY.
HOUSE OF WAX

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MOVIEWORLD
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1 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN - PG13
STAR WARS III - GP
2 (DOLBY) HOUSE OF WAX - R13
STAR WARS III - GP
3 (DOLBY) AMITYVILLE HORROR R13
4 (DOLBY) IN GOOD COMPANY PG13
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER PG13
STAR WARS III - GP

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 JACKET
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 TAGOS SA LAMAN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) STAR WARS EPISODE 3
5 STAR WARS EPISODE 3

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 AMITYVILLE
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) STAR WARS EPISODE 3
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY) XXX 2
2 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 (SDDS) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 (DTS) GUESS WHO
4 GOLD (DTS) PACIFIER
5 GOLD (DOLBY) IN GOOD COMPANY
6 GOLD (SDDS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) AMITYVILLE HORROR
8 THE INTERPRETER
9 FINDING NEVERLAND
10 CAN THIS BE LOVE

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HOUSE OF WAX
BIKINI OPEN
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
THE WEDDING DATE
STAR WARS - EPISODE III
XXX 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
GUESS WHO
IN GOOD COMPANY
AMITYVILLE HORROR
ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
5 HOUSE OF WAX

MARKET!MARKET!
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 RETURN OF THE DEMONS
3 RESERVED
4 SEX & ZEN THE UNTOLD STORY

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) GUESS WHO
2 JACKET
3 (DTS EX) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 WEDDING DATE

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 GUESS WHO
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 (DTS) WEDDING DATE

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 (DOLBY) WEDDING DATE
4 (DTS) ONG BAK

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 HIDE AND SEEK

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 (DOLBY) IN GOOD COMPANY
3 (DOLBY) AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 (DOLBY) HOUSE OF WAX

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 CURSED
2 (DTS) CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 WEDDING DATE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 (DOLBY) THE JACKET
3 (DTS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 WEDDING DATE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ONG BAK
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) HIDE AND SEEK

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 BOGGY MAN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) ONG BAK
4 (DTS) THE PACIFIER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 (DOLBY) SAHARA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) KID
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 KIROT SA DIBDIB
4 (DTS) ALONE IN THE DARK

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) CURSED
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DTS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 TAGOS SA LAMAN
5 WEDDING DATE

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 (DTS) BOOGEYMAN
4 (DOLBY) ONG BAK

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 THE PACIFIER
3 THE JACKET
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 TAGOS SA LAMAN
2 HOSTAGE

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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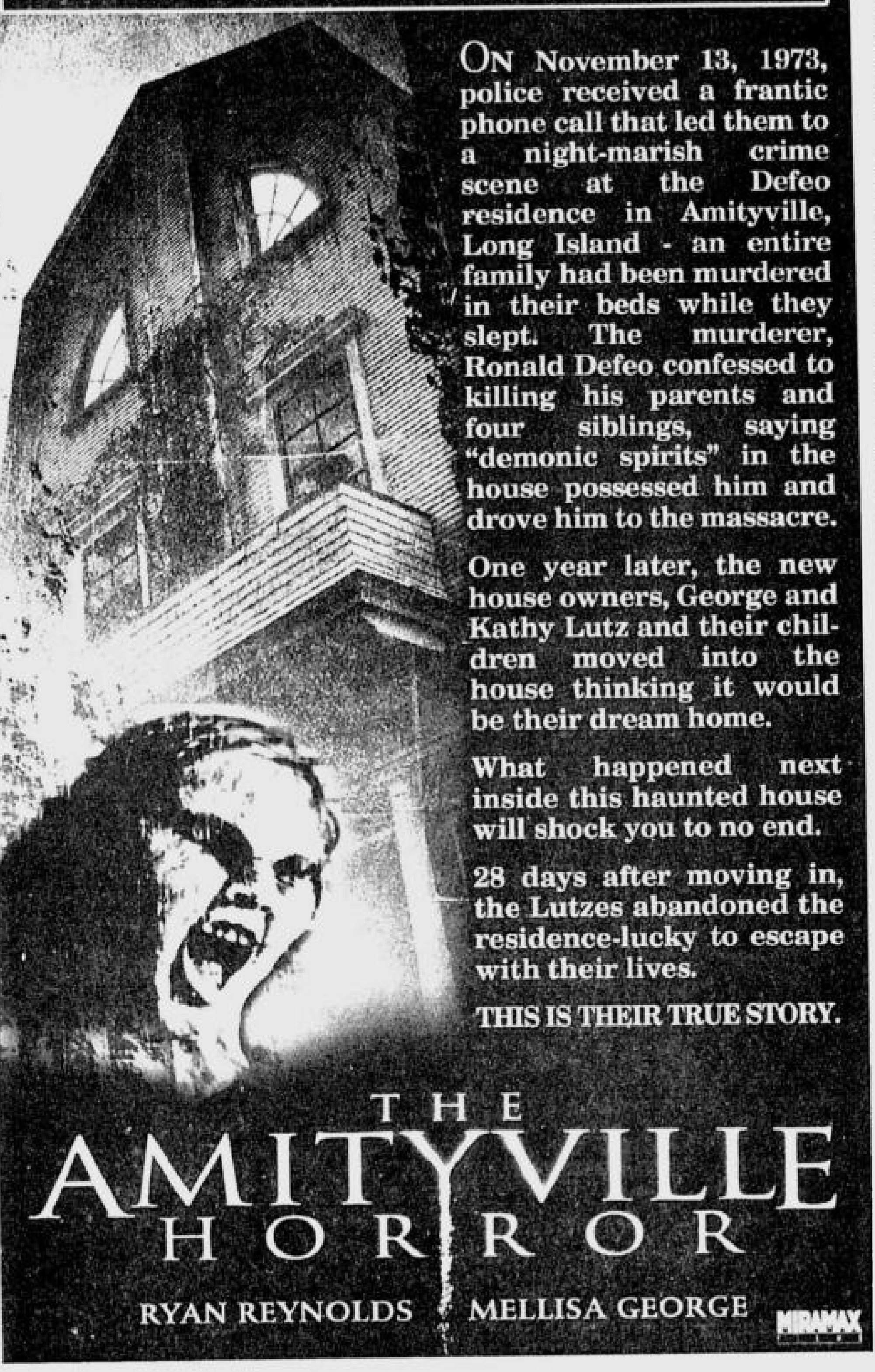


ON November 13, 1973, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a night-marish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been murdered in their beds while they slept. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying "demonic spirits" in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.

One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.

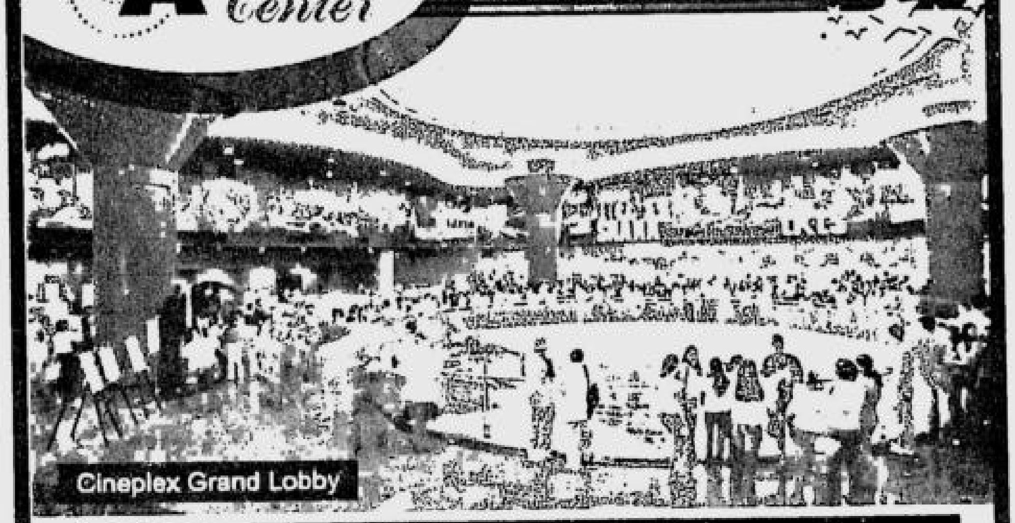
What happened next inside this haunted house will shock you to no end.

28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the residence-lucky to escape with their lives.

THIS IS THEIR TRUE STORY.

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
RYAN REYNOLDS MELLISA GEORGE
MIRAMAX

Araneta Center Leisure Guide


Cineplex Grand Lobby

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HOUSE OF WAX 1:50 / 4:20 / 6:50 / 9:20
BIKINI OPEN 12:30 / 2:40 / 4:50 / 7:00 / 9:00
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40
THE WEDDING DATE 1:40 / 4:10 / 6:40 / 9:10
STAR WARS - EPISODE III ADVANCE SCREENING 10:00 pm
XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL 1:45 / 4:15 / 6:45 / 9:15
GUESS WHO 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
IN GOOD COMPANY
AMITYVILLE HORROR
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA P 249 / P299
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 3:00pm / 6:00pm
STAR WARS - EPISODE III ADV. SCRNG 10:40 pm
ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 11:00 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00
❷ BIKINI OPEN 11:25 / 1:35 / 3:45 / 5:55 / 8:05
❸ AMITYVILLE HORROR
❹ CAN THIS BE LOVE 1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00
❺ HOUSE OF WAX 12:40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS
ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 18
4:45pm Talk N Text vs. San Miguel / 7:35pm Alaska vs. Sta Lucia
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 22
4:15pm Fedex vs Coca Cola / 6:35pm Purefoods vs Sta Lucia
CARTER FASHION SHOW May 21, Sat., 8pm
Paolo Bediones / Maureen Larrazabal
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26 Thursday 8pm
CENTER EVENTS
FOOD GALLERY & FOOD PLAZA — Enjoy a special halo halo for only P25 with every P75 food purchase at Ali Mall Food Gallery and Farmers Plaza Food Plaza until May 31.
TACO BELL — Get a FREE Tropicana Twister with every purchase of a Meximelt and 16 oz. Pepsi at Taco Bell on the Ground Floor of Gateway Mall until June 6.
FOOD EXPRESS — For a minimum purchase of P150 at participating outlets, get two (2) FREE games at Time Zone on Level 3 of Gateway Mall until July 26.
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

'Monster' No. 1 in US

LOS ANGELES—American moviegoers rewarded Jane Fonda's return to the big screen by making "Monster-in-Law" the weekend's top movie, though the comedy was short of a monster hit.

The total box office slump continued for a 12th straight week, but the force is expected to return next week when the final chapter in the "Star Wars" saga—"Star Wars: Episode III—Revenge of the Sith,"—hits cinemas.

"Monster-in-Law," which pits Jennifer Lopez against Fonda as her villainous prospective mother-in-law, took in $24 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The weekend's other major opener, the Jet Li action flick "Unleashed," took in a respectable $10.6 million. Last week's box office champ, the Orlando Bloom Crusades epic "Kingdom of Heaven," slipped to fourth place with $9.6 million, a 51 percent drop from its opening weekend.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations, official box office tracker:

1) "Monster-in-Law," $24 million
2) "Kicking & Screaming," $21 million
3) "Unleashed," $10.6 million
4) "Kingdom of Heaven," $9.6 million
5) "Crash," $7.2 million
6) "House of Wax," $6.3 million
7) "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," $4.8 million
8) "The Interpreter," $4.4 million
9) "XXX: State of the Union," $2.2 million
10) "Mindhunters," $2 million

AP

Boob-tube boo-boos

From page A27

the special lifts the veil on the artistic, spiritual and secretive facets of their society. Replay at 12 noon on May 24, and 6 p.m. on May 28.

'Profiles of Nature: Ambush'

ON Animal Planet at 8 p.m. on May 30, the show on view is "Profiles of Nature: Ambush.". The special explores the vast arsenal of weapons and techniques animals use to conquer their prey.

'Luv Ko si Mother Earth'

THE CHILDREN'S play, "Luv Ko si Mother Earth," is a SNACK Arts production that tackles environmental issues in an entertaining and educational manner. **Ricky Davao** is the storyteller, and its cast includes **Lucy Valenzuela, Billy Parjan, Kim Diaz, Miguel Castro, Luz Imperial, JM Dizon** and **Richard Signey**. For bookings, call Bibsy Carballo at 7210801.

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

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FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA
632-9115/16

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN • THX
STAR WARS EPISODE III-Block Screening
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
STAR WARS EPISODE III 10:00 PM
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 HOUSE OF WAX
Sneak Preview
6 THE INTERPRETER
STAR WARS EPISODE III 10:00 PM
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
8 XXX 2
9 THE WEDDING DATE
10 THE PACIFIER

ERMITA
636-7809 to 12

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 HOUSE OF WAX Sneak Preview
STAR WARS EPISODE III 10:00 PM
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 XXX 2
6 IN GOOD COMPANY
7 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 HOUSE OF WAX Sneak Preview
STAR WARS EPISODE III 10:00 PM
2 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 XXX 2
6 AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 THE INTERPRETER

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 HOUSE OF WAX Sneak P review
2 XXX 2
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 IN GOOD COMPANY
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 HOUSE OF WAX / STAR WARS III
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
2 SAMARA RING 2
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 XXX 2

CAINTA
240-4661

1 XXX 2
2 HOUSE OF WAX Sneak Preview
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

STAR WARS
EPISODE III
REVENGE OF THE SITH

Opens on MAY 18

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no more waiting...no more queueing
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TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE
AT THE TICKET BOOTH
FROM MAY 11 to 22

STA. ROSA
(049) 837-0907

1 BOSO / STAR WARS III 10:00 PM
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 THE WEDDING DATE

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
(043) 312-5870

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 THE PACIFIER
3 SIX
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 BIKINI OPEN

DASMARIÑAS
(046) 852-2125
(046) 416-4332

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 BOSO / STAR WARS III 10:00 PM
5 XXX 2

ANGELES
(045) 892-2348

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 GUESS WHO? / STAR WARS III 10:00 PM

IMUS
(046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8188

1 XXX 2
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE / STAR WARS III

STARMILLS
(045) 875-1927
(045) 961-5270

1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 SIX
3 GUESS WHO?
4 XXX 2
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453
(034) 441-0459

1 THE WEDDING DATE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 ALONE IN THE DARK / STAR WARS III
4 SAHARA
5 XXX 2
6 SIX

ILOILO
(033) 336-8070

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 GUESS WHO? / STAR WARS III
5 SAHARA
6 THE WEDDING DATE

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CHAMPIONS LEAGUE of 5
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Ms. Anna Fegi

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Automatic Center Appliance Exhibit May 9-20, 2005	AV Surfer Exhibit May 9-22, 2005	Ms. Orange Brutus Contest May 21,2005

AYALA
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Saturday Night Fever
May 20&21, 2005

GREENBELT 1
Onstage

Repertory Philippines
"SUMMER WORKSHOP SHOWCASE"
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AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 AMITYVILLE HORROR/ STAR WARS EP. 3	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN / STAR WARS EP. 3	3 HOUSE OF WAX	4 BIKINI OPEN
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN / STAR WARS EP. 3	2 IN GOOD COMPANY / STAR WARS EP. 3	3 THX THE WEDDING DATE 12:30, 2:40, 4:30, 6:30 / STAR WARS EP. 3 - 10:00 pm GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	5 HOUSE OF WAX	6 GUESS WHO / STAR WARS EP. 3	7 SHATTERED GLASS / STAR WARS EP. 3
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE AMITYVILLE HORROR 2:35, 4:45, 6:55 / STAR WARS EP. 3 - 10:30 pm GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN 1:30, 4:15, 7:00 / STAR WARS EP. 3 10:30 pm GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE INTERPRETER 2:30, 5:00, 7:30 / STAR WARS EP. 3 10:00 pm, 12:45 am GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HOUSE OF WAX 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30 / STAR WARS EP 3 10:00 PM GUARANTEED SEATS	5 IN GOOD COMPANY 1:35, 4:00, 6:25, 8:50 / STAR WARS EP 3 11:00 pm GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX GUESS WHO / STAR WARS EP. 3	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN		
	3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	4 HOUSE OF WAX	5 IN GOOD COMPANY	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE CURSED / STAR WARS EP. 3	2 GUESS WHO	3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	4 BIKINI OPEN

1 DAY TO GO

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AYALA CINEMAS

STAR WARS
EPISODE III
REVENGE OF THE SITH
OPENS MAY 19

Stargazing at the Glorietta 1

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MEET & GREET the stars of

BIKINI OPEN

TONIGHT (May 18 - Wed.) 6:00 PM
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The film BIKINI OPEN is set to open on May 18 at Ayala Cinemas.

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③ House of Wax
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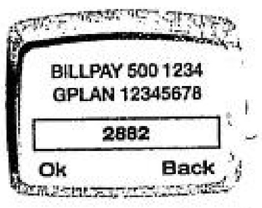
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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

₱15-M set being built for 'Big Brother'

By Jocelyn Valle, *Contributor*

ABS-CBN is building a house worth P15 million across its Quezon City estate, for use as setting of the Philippine edition of the global reality TV hit, "Big Brother."

This was divulged by Linggit Tan, business unit manager and producer of ABS-CBN shows like "Goin' Bulilit" and "Quizon Avenue" when she met the press on Thursday, along with representatives of Endemol, the company behind "Big Brother."

"It will be a complete house, with two bedrooms and a living room," she said, adding that her group had asked occupants of houses on the property, which ABS-CBN owns, to move out.

P15-M SET/ A2-2

ANUSKA Ban

LINGGIT Tan

ED Sharples

OPENING THIS WEEK

Bikini Open

Directed by Jeffrey Jeturian
Stars Cherrie Pie Picache, Diana Zubiri, Francine Prieto, Rafael Rosel, Alfred Vargas

SUMMARY: A behind-the-scenes look at bikini modeling contests through the eyes of manipulative broadcast journalist Susan Logarta-Ferrer. Her news show is about to be axed, so Logarta-Ferrer exploits the ambitious contestants in the name of higher ratings. Their lives and loves are exposed; their sins and secrets turned into entertainment fare.

Described as "a mockumentary or a fake documentary" by award-winning filmmaker Jeturian, his follow-up to the successful "Bridal Shower" aims "to satirize public affairs programs that inject entertainment into their content . . . sometimes at the expense of objectivity and truth."

Running gag: It comes from the same film company (Seiko) that brought us "Machete 1 and 2" and "Patikim ng Pinya."

(Opens May 18.)

Star Wars Episode III Revenge of the Sith

Directed by George Lucas
Stars Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Hayden Christensen, Samuel L. Jackson, Christopher Lee, Ian McDiarmid

SUMMARY: The last installment in an epic science-fiction series, this mega-production is set three years after the events depicted in "Star Wars Episode II—Attack of the Clones." The downfall of the Republic begins as the Clone War rages on. Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi are hailed as heroes in the campaign against the evil droid forces of the aptly named General Grievous. But Anakin is tormented by visions that secret wife Padme Amidala would die in childbirth. His fears leads him to the dark side of the Force, becoming Sith Lord Darth Vader in the end.

Online critic Chris Tilly calls "Episode III" as the "best 'Star Wars' film since 'The Empire Strikes Back.'" Even the performances, wrote Tilly, "are a vast improvement on the previous prequels, with McGregor and Christensen seeming far more

OPENING/ A2-2

SHARON Cuneta: "I cried."

Chicago gives award to Mega

FRESH from the twin highs of her packed concert in Jacksonville, Florida, and her visit to Disneyworld with daughters Frankie and Miel, Sharon Cuneta received two pleasant surprises in Chicago, where she was set to perform at the Rosemont Theater over the weekend.

The Megastar was invited to a cocktail reception where she was awarded a plaque of recognition by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White.

"On behalf of the people of Illinois," the plaque read, "I (White)... officially recognize and commend Sharon Cuneta on her decades of dedicated service to Filipinos and Filipino-Americans by tirelessly providing hope, laughter, and inspiration to her many fans... around the world."

Via SMS, the singer-actress told INQUIRER Entertainment: "I couldn't help crying."

During the same gathering, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley sent an official "Welcome" letter that read, in part: "[She] has contributed significantly to the world of entertainment... Her work has earned her distinction amongst Asian-American communities and [other] admirers around the world."

New OraCare Mouthrinse: A Breakthrough in Oral Care

We all know that brushing your teeth is a vital part of your hygiene regimen every day. But while brushing helps keep the teeth clean and healthy, it's not enough to get rid of bacteria lingering in other parts of the mouth.

And if you don't like gargling with mouthwash because of its burning sensation, preferring to risk having bad breath over the sting mouthwashes bring, here's a refreshing new product that's perfect for you.

New OraCare Mouthrinse, a breakthrough in oral care! Now you don't need to be silenced by foul odors! Because OraCare is the first mouthrinse with no alcohol content – it's safe and gentle on the delicate tissues lining the oral cavity. Only OraCare has the breakthrough active ingredient known as Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide – an oral antibacterial agent that gently cleans minus the stinging sensation. It goes to work immediately upon contact with bacteria in the mouth and through its natural oxidation process, it releases oxygen that breaks down the cell wall of bacteria and eliminates odor-causing volatile sulfur compounds.

What's more, OraCare gently deep cleanses even in hard-to-reach areas, reducing plaque build-up and stops odor-causing bacteria from spreading. Unlike other alcohol-based mouthwashes, OraCare Mouthrinse contains purified water, Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide and peppermint flavor for an effective yet soothing gargling experience.

Now, you can say hello to a breath of real freshness with new OraCare Mouthrinse. Make it your daily oral care!

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions on OraCare and Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide:

What makes OraCare a breakthrough product?

OraCare is the first locally manufactured mouthwash product to use Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide as its active ingredient. While this ingredient is already used and accepted in the United States and other parts of the world due to its safety and effectiveness, Pascual Laboratories is the first pharmaceutical company to make this ingredient locally available and affordable.

What is Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide?

Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide (ClO2) was discovered as an oxidizing agent which results in several beneficial actions such as destroying micro-organism and eliminating odors. It was found to be very effective in keeping the mouth extremely clean. The utilization of Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide (ClO2) to safely oxidize the source of impurities generated in the mouth provides a pure and clean result.

What benefits and effects can be expected from Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide?

Among others, it gets rid of odor-causing bacteria even in hard-to-reach places of the mouth like under the tongue, walls of the mouth and the back of the mouth. It oxidizes single-celled organisms such as bacteria, germs, viruses, fungi, spores, yeast, mold and mildew. It eliminates all odors by oxidizing the sulfur bonds. Moreover, while it is effective, stabilized ClO2 has no harmful properties and is so safe that the US Environment Protection Agency rates its toxicity level the same as water.

For feedback and suggestions,
e-mail: oracare@pascuallab.com
or text: 0920-9618126.

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Introducing the breakthrough OraCare Mouthrinse! Unlike mouthwashes with alcohol, it has Stabilized Chlorine Dioxide that's proven safe in getting rid of odor-causing bacteria even in hard-to-reach places of the mouth. So for your daily oral care, get the refreshing confidence of OraCare Mouthrinse!

ORAL CARE UPDATE
Finally, a mouthrinse that cleans and freshens hard-to-reach places of the mouth!

For your daily oral care, use OraCare Mouthrinse after toothbrushing.

Mouthwalls
Under the tongue
Back of the mouth

NO STING • NO ALCOHOL
OraCare
MOUTHRINSE
For a breath of real freshness

OPENING THIS WEEK

From page A2-1

comfortable in their roles this time around."

Tilly's conclusion: "'Revenge of the Sith' is magical moviemaking on the grandest of scales; a fitting climax to a truly unique series of films."

(Opens May 19.)

House of Wax

Directed by Jaume Collet-Sera

Stars Elisha Cuthbert, Chad Michael Murray, Brian Van Holt, Paris Hilton, Jared Padalecki

SUMMARY: Bored twentysomethings embark on a holiday in hell. Once again, a bunch of clueless youth gets slaughtered one by one after stumbling on an old wax museum in an abandoned town. As gang members start vanishing, the exhibits in the wax museum increase. It doesn't take a genius to figure out the connection, but our oblivious troupe plod on and on and on . . .

Critic James Berardinelli, writing for the website movie-reviews.colossus, fumed: "Acting is not a high priority for the director . . . The members of the cast are better known for their looks . . . than their thespian skills. [Hilton] was obviously hired for reasons that have nothing to do with her ability to recite dialogue. To be fair, [Hilton] can [deliver] her lines with more conviction than Steven Seagal or Jean-Claude Van Damme."

The Hollywood Reporter was particularly harsh: "[She's] so bad she steals the show."

Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun Times was more diplomatic: "She does exactly what she is required to do in a movie like this, with all the skill, admittedly finite, that is required."

(Opens May 16 or 17.)

₱15-M set being built

From page A2-1

From the network's 14th-floor restaurant, Tan pointed to a site where a construction team was busy at work. "Tall fences will be built to keep intruders away," she said.

Biggest investment

Tan said "Big Brother" project is ABS-CBN's biggest investment so far, in terms of money paid for rights. She refused to disclose how much, exactly, but the big smiles on the faces of Endemol's Anuska Ban, executive director for creative and production support, and Ed Sharples, sales director for South East Asia, gave away an answer: huge.

The Philippines is the 31st country to adapt to local conditions the "Big Brother" concept originally thought up by two Dutch men, Joop van den Ende and Jon Mol. (Mol is no longer with Endemol, and sold his shares a few years ago, Sharples said.) The program is on its seventh season in the United States, Germany and Holland.

Endemol is also behind "Fear Factor."

"Big Brother" is a term coined by George Orwell in his novel, "1984," to refer to the state or government which, he predicted while writing the his book back in 1948, would be watching everybody's moves. The show is premised on this, Sharples explained, because cameras and microphones will be operating 24/7 to record the pre-selected 12 occupants' activities.

Tan also revealed that her group had to set up a call center to facilitate inquiries from would-be contestants. "We get 1,500 calls a day," she said. "We'll base our selection on the callers' personalities. Looks aren't our primary concern. The number of applicants will be trimmed down to six males and six females."

The producers will subject the 12 contestants, or housemates, to background checks and psychiatric tests to determine if they are mentally prepared to spend 100 days in isolation with total strangers—in a house with cameras and microphones that will allow the whole country to watch them on television. The housemates will have no contact, whatsoever, with the outside world—no TV, newspapers, radios and phones!

What they will have is the chance to win a cool million pesos, a house and lot, a car, the privilege to join the list of global "Big Brother" winners, and instant fame.

The housemates will each be given a weekly allowance of P500 for necessities, including food. They will have two sets of tasks: the first one should be accomplished at the end of the day, and the second by week's end.

One member will leave the house at the end of each week. Who will stay, will be determined by audience voting through telephone and SMS. In other countries, except Thailand, audiences vote for those they want out.

No director

"There's also no director," Tan said. "The producers will choose which shots will be aired."

She said she first saw the show in Australia last year. "I was there to look for a new editing software," she recalled. Somebody mentioned 'Big Brother' to me. I watched last year's season on tape. I also found out that Filipinos in Australia are 'Big Brother' fans."

Tan believes that Filipinos at home are ready for what Sharples called a "reality soap."

"It's interesting because there's np acting," she said. "It's about building relationships and watching how people behave."

Sharples put it another way: "Essentially," he said, "human nature is pretty much the same anywhere in the world." *(Call 1-800-5223-KUYA or [02] 929-KUYA)*

UNLEASHED

A full-caliber, ultraviolence cage fighting

Jet Li in action cage fighting scene in "UNLEASHED"

Martial art superstar **JET LI** teams with top action director Louis Leterrier in **UNLEASHED**.

Ever since Bart (BOB HOSKINS) tore Danny (JET LI) from the streets, at the age of 4 years old, he's treated him like a dog, training him literally to attack. Today, he is a champion cage fighter. Danny is his secret weapon, capable of launching himself on anyone as soon as he's ordered to, without leaving his target the slightest chance of survival.

CAGE FIGHTING AKA HUMAN COCKFIGHTING

Wasting no time in setting the action scenes, **UNLEASHED** opens with a no-holds-barred fight scene in a caged ring and - as with the ensuing battles - Jet Li's performance as a martial artist is amply showcased and masterfully choreographed by Hong Kong's legendary **YUEN WOO PING** of Matrix fame.

The film features some of the world's top cage fighters. The savagery of this llegal sport will be seen for the first time on screen.

Cage fighters have been described as the modern day equivalent of Roman gladiators, whose brutal battle for victory is considered the ultimate test of mind and body.

This violent sport is sweeping across the world in illegal underground arenas, drawing thousands of spectators.

Cage fights are bloody messes and the losers often end up permanently crippled. The combatants lock horns in an octagonal cage, surrounded by a 1.5 metre (5ft) high fence, and once battle is under way it is virtually a case of anything goes as they attempt to punch, kick, slap or wrestle their way to victory. There are No rules. No mercy and No surrender.

The film also stars Academy Award® Winner **Morgan Freeman**. From Focus Features a division of UNIVERSAL PICTURES. •

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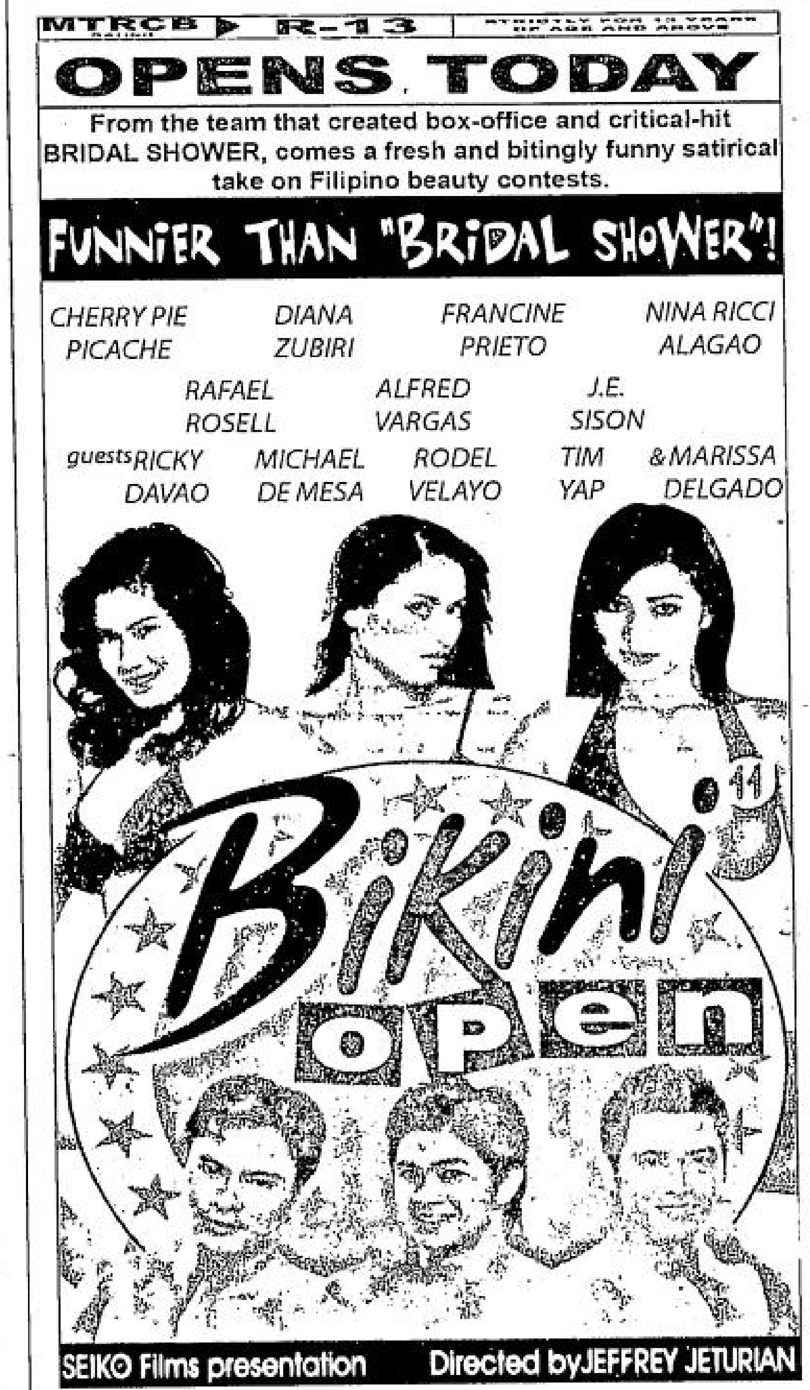
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OPENS TODAY
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FUNNIER THAN "BRIDAL SHOWER"!
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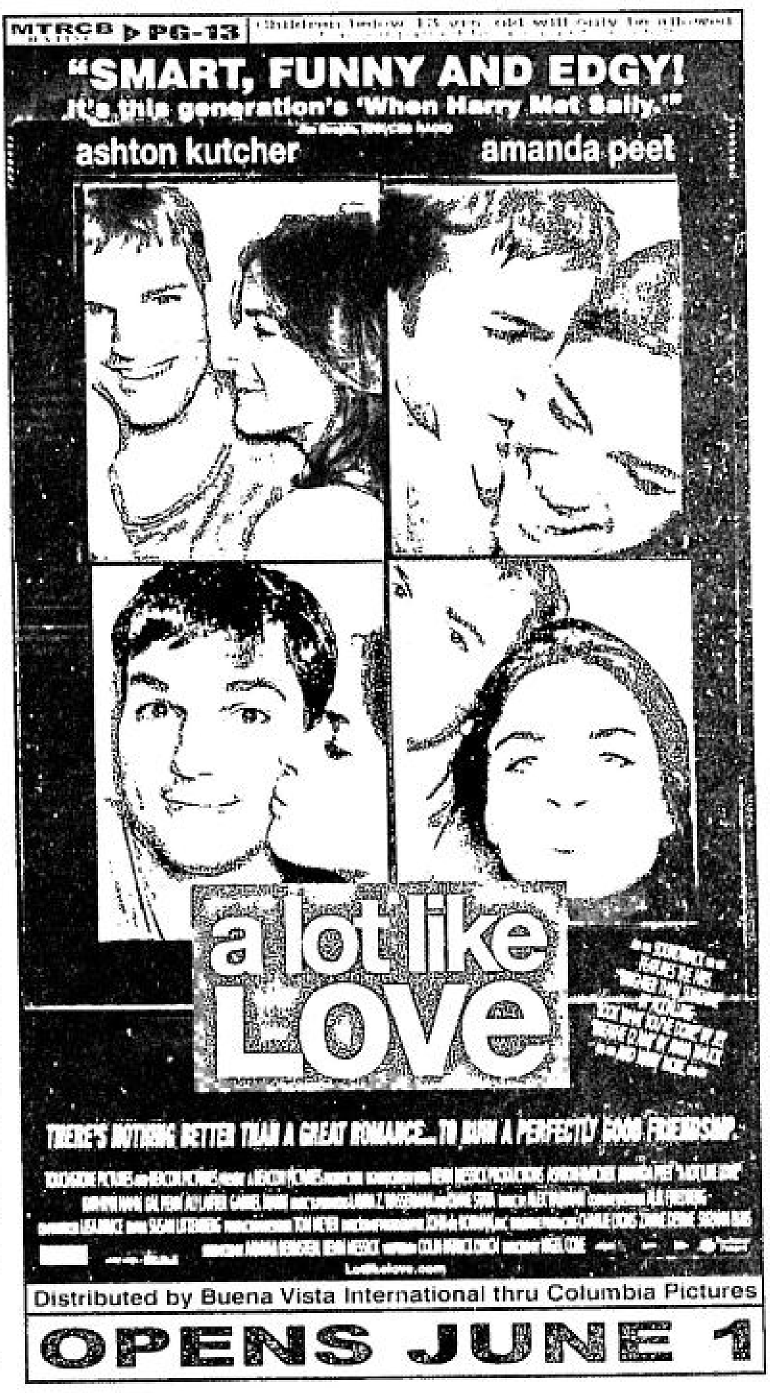
DIANA ZUBIRI
FRANCINE PRIETO
NINA RICCI ALAGAO
RAFAEL ROSELL
ALFRED VARGAS
J.E. SISON
guests RICKY DAVAO
MICHAEL DE MESA
RODEL VELAYO
TIM YAP
& MARISSA DELGADO
Bikini open
SEIKO Films presentation
Directed by JEFFREY JETURIAN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"SMART, FUNNY AND EDGY! It's this generation's 'When Harry Met Sally.'"
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amanda peet
a lot like Love
THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN A GREAT ROMANCE... TO RUIN A PERFECTLY GOOD FRIENDSHIP.
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures
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ORLANDO BLOOM
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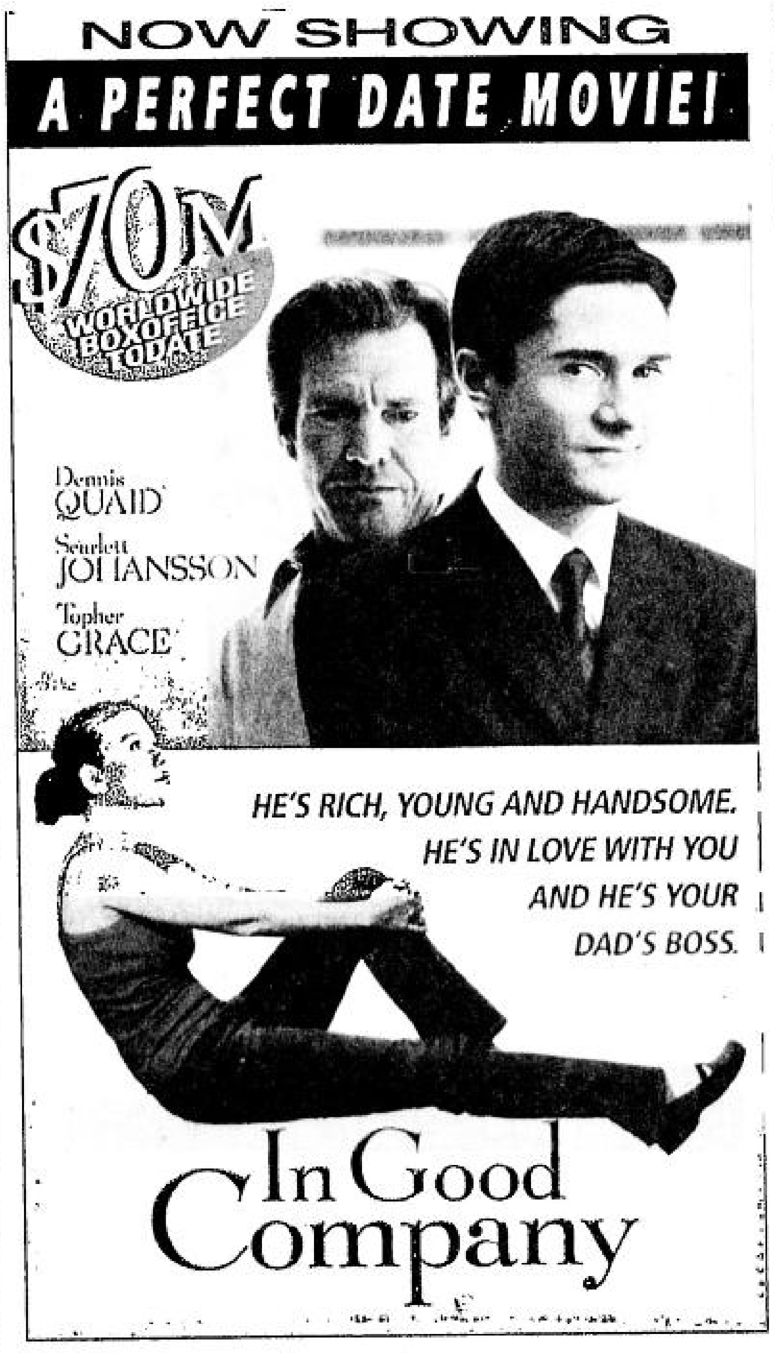
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Dennis QUAID
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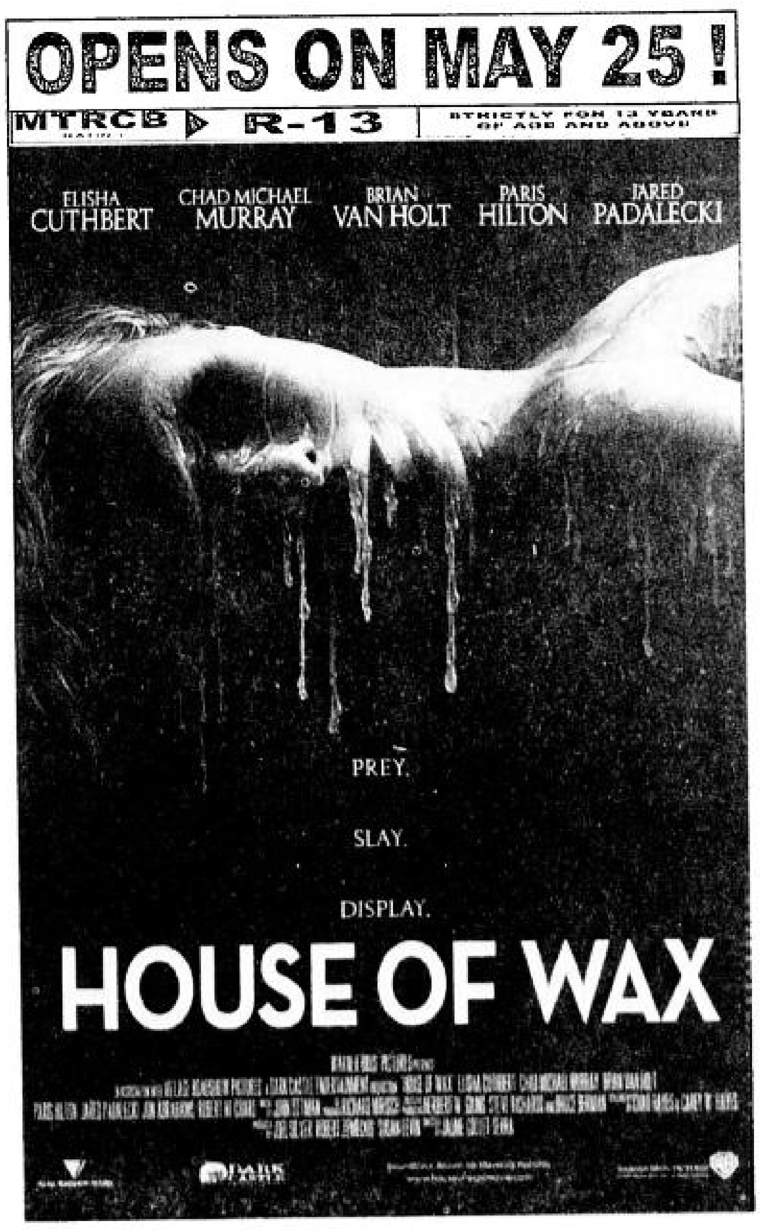
HE'S RICH, YOUNG AND HANDSOME. HE'S IN LOVE WITH YOU AND HE'S YOUR DAD'S BOSS.
In Good Company


OPENS ON MAY 25 !
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13
STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
ELISHA CUTHBERT
CHAD MICHAEL MURRAY
BRIAN VAN HOLT
PARIS HILTON
JARED PADALECKI
PREY.
SLAY.
DISPLAY.
HOUSE OF WAX

Jazz, Pinoy style

REVIEW

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

JAZZ is seen by most Filipinos as being enjoyed only by the elite.

The jazz group Buhay (Life) wants to erase this perception through seminars and workshops that accompany the promotion of its self-titled album.

Put together in 2000, Buhay is composed of Tots Tolentino (saxophone), Eddie "Tateng" Katindig Jr. (keyboard), Meong Paccana (bass), Mar Dizon (drums) and Chedi Vergara, formerly of Smokey Mountain (vocals).

Dizon told the INQUIRER that the group was born in Galo's Bar of Wowie Posadas. The intention was to popularize jazz with its accent on improvisation and easy rhythms.

"We [wanted] to expose more Filipinos to jazz," Dizon said. "That is why we included popular songs in the album."

The 10-track collection produced by keyboard and saxophone player Mel Villena features such pop hits as Jessa Zaragoza's "Bakit Pa?" arranged by Katindig, "Superstar ng Buhay Ko" and the theme from 1960s television show "Oras ng Ligaya," both reinterpreted by Tolentino.

"Any song could be given a jazz twist," Dizon explained.

DIZON

TOLENTINO

PACCANA

The album opens with "Flunk," about the first time Dizon fell off a scooter with daughter Minique. On this track, Dizon's infectious drum rolls are accompanied by great spot numbers by Tolentino, Katindig and Paccana.

It's no surprise that "Flunk" was named "Best Jazz Instrumental Composition" during the 2003 Katha awards.

Next is "Tiramisu," Tolentino's foot-stomping tribute to the great trumpet player, Terumasa Hino. Another notable number is Dizon's "Kalabukab"—meaning, the swaying of a "tabo" or dipper on water.

Based on the Maguindanao rhythmic mode called Binalig, the tune was recognized as the "Best Jazz Instrumental Recording" during the 2003 Awit Awards.

Vergara likewise shows her jazz side here, and does not disappoint.

Her take on composer Ivan Lins' popular "The Island" is sensual and dreamy, her voice acting as another instrument playing with the quartet. The same goes for her interpretation of Eryka Badu's "Apple Tree."

Buhay earlier showed off the Philippines' gift for music before foreign audiences during the Singapore Jazz Festival and Malaysian Jazz Festival in 2001. The group was also one of the featured artists in 2004's first Manila Jazz Fest, one of the events in the French Spring Festival. Buhay was set to go to France last year to represent the Philippines in a major music festival, but the event was postponed due to an artists' strike in France.

Dizon said Katindig had left the band and established himself in the Los Angeles jazz circuit. Wowie Posadas replaced him on the keyboards.

He added that the group was looking forward to again representing the country in this year's Bali Jazz Festival in Indonesia, further spreading the word on the Philippine brand of jazz.

SHANG CINEPLEX
ADVANCE TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE!
Come to the Streetscape at 6:30 p.m. on May 18 and party while you await the 10:00 Premiere Screening of this great movie.
Advance tickets for sale at no extra service fee from May 6, 2005 onwards. Available at the Shang Cineplex ticket counters at Level 6 and the ticket booth at Level 1.
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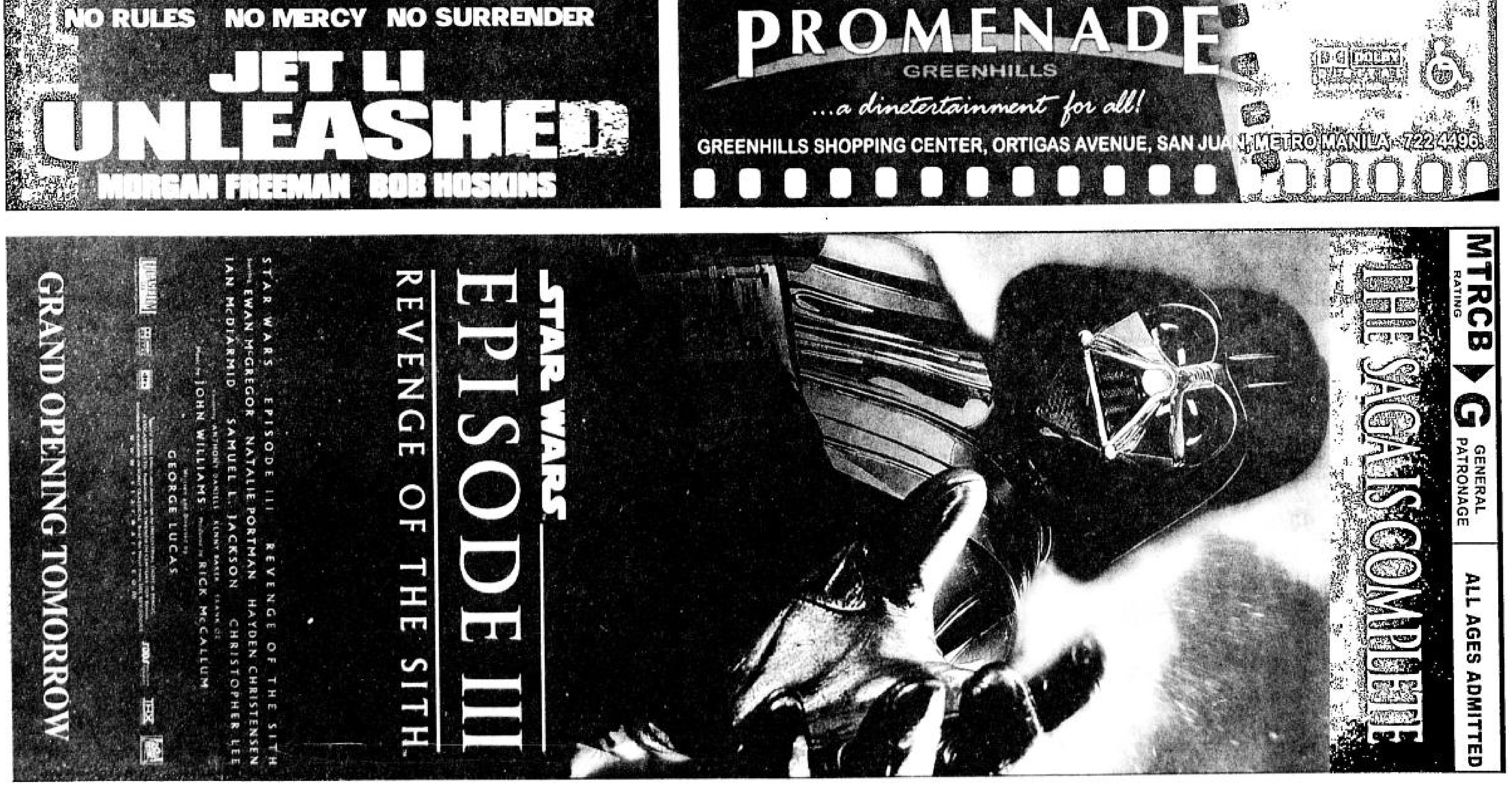
MTRCB RATING
G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
THE SAGA IS COMPLETE
STAR WARS
EPISODE III
REVENGE OF THE SITH
STAR WARS EPISODE III REVENGE OF THE SITH
EWAN McGREGOR NATALIE PORTMAN HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN
IAN McDIARMID SAMUEL L. JACKSON CHRISTOPHER LEE
ANTHONY DANIELS KENNY BAKER
JOHN WILLIAMS RICK McCALLUM
GEORGE LUCAS
GRAND OPENING TOMORROW

Citibank and Mercury Drug launch first co-branded health and wellness card

The country's biggest credit card issuer forges an alliance with the Philippines' leading drugstore chain to deliver unparalleled health and wellness benefits to Filipino families

Enjoy FREE consultations with dermatologists, plastic surgeons and aesthetic dentisits at Clarity Aesthetic and Laser Center

Healthy living has its own rewards. When you are well, you get to live life to the fullest with your family and care for them. Today, Citibank, the industry innovator in card products and services, and Mercury Drug, the leading drugstore in the Philippines, have come together to bring to the market the first and only credit card that offers rewards that are beneficial to one's well-being.

"We at Citibank are extremely proud to have Mercury Drug as our partner in introducing this latest innovative product to the Philippine market," says Citibank Cards Business Director Michellina Triwardhany. "We strongly feel that this card will adequately address the health needs of Filipinos, as well as offer them increased value for money."

"Mercury Drug is very pleased and honored to have an industry leader like Citibank as a partner in this undertaking," says Mercury Drug President Vivian Que-Azcona. "The Mercury Drug-Citibank Card is another great way for us to continually serve our growing number of customers and offer them a host of privileges that are very much attuned to their needs and lifestyles."

Healthway Medical Clinic
Principal cardholders get a free annual check-up at Healthway.

At the Mercury Drug-Citibank contract signing: (From left) Nina Aguas, Country Business Manager for the Global Consumer Group of Citibank; Nanoo Pamnani, Citibank Asia Pacific Director of Strategic Technical Operations and Special Projects ; Mariano Que, Chairman of Mercury Drug; and Ms Vivian Que-Azcona, President of Mercury Drug, during the signing of the tie-up agreement between Citibank and Mercury Drug.

The Mercury Drug-Citibank Card is the first and only card that gives cardholders rebates each time they purchase medicines and other items at Mercury Drug. Cardholders get 2% rebates on purchases for every Mercury Drug transaction and 0.5% rebate for non-Mercury Drug transactions. Apart from these, Mercury Drug-Citibank cardholders also get exclusive health and wellness benefits at select establishments.

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Today wins Standard struggle/ Cocktales/B3

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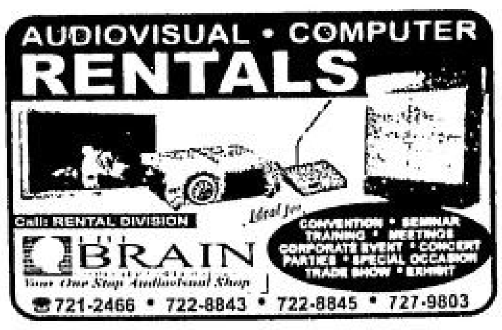
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CAP's white knight withdraws ₱6-B pledge

Government regulator still won't allow pre-need firm to sell securities

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

A GROUP of property firms belonging to lawyer Romeo Roxas has withdrawn its commitment to infuse P6 billion in the troubled pre-need firm College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP).

According to a ranking official at the Securities and Exchange Commission, Roxas had filed a letter saying he would only infuse the much needed capital if SEC were to renew the dealer's license of CAP.

At press time, the SEC has not renewed CAP's permit to sell securities, pending compliance to requirements such as addressing its own capital inadequacy, and wiping out underdeposits to its trust fund.

Bobby Cafe, first vice president CAP, said Roxas did not receive the SEC's commitment that it would grant the pre-need firm its dealer's license.

The SEC source, who had asked not to be named, also said the pending plan of another investor called International Global Capital Holdings AG to infuse around $12.5 million in the pre-need firm would not be enough for CAP to secure a dealer's license from the SEC.

Roxas, who owns Green Square Properties and Green Circle Properties and Resources, earlier proposed to buy into CAP using parcels of land in Baler town in the eastern province of Aurora near Dingalan Bay.

The pieces of property are worth P6 billion.

But some of the titles for the property, measuring 30.46 million square meters, are said to belong to the government.

Roxas then reportedly proposed to issue separate titles, free and clear of land claims under the Agrarian Reform program.

Roxas reportedly owns 30,000 hectares of land in the area.

The SEC has also cleared CAP of a deal that would allow it to secure at least P1 billion in new funding from its Zurich investor, IGCH.

The SEC has approved CAP's proposed issuance of an asset safe keeping receipt (ASKR) to IGCH, provided this would go to the company's trust fund and be used to pay planholders.

CAP's trust fund now stands at P4.7 billion.

The ASKR would trigger the release of the new funds to CAP.

Also, the ASKR simply verifies CAP's assets—that it has in its possession some $150 million worth of MRT bonds.

The ASKR however does not encumber CAP's assets to IGCH.

Once the ASKR is issued to IGCH, the new equity is supposed to come in to replenish CAP's shrinking trust fund within a certain period.

Once cleared by the SEC, CAP will issue P1 billion worth of preferred shares to IGCH in exchange for P1 billion in new capital, CAP director Robert John Sobrepeña said.

CAP will then ask for the SEC's approval to raise its capital to P1 billion from P300 million.

CAP had said the IGCH was willing to infuse $12.5 million into CAP in exchange for preferred shares.

The IGCH may also acquire one board seat. The infusion, equivalent to roughly P675 million, will address part of the first semester's P1.2-billion tuition requirement.

To make the deal possible, CAP's trustee bank has sought a written approval from the SEC regarding CAP's equity deal with IGCH.

The second semester's tuition requirement of P1.2 billion will be covered by the possible sale of CAP assets, which include its 1,000-hectare CAP building in Sucat, and shares of stock.

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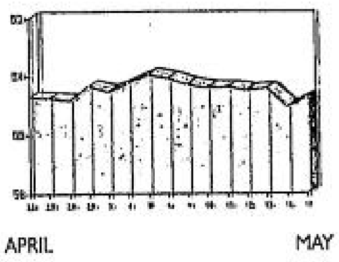

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As of 5 p.m., May 17, 2005

GOLD: $420.00-420.50

per ounce Hong Kong, May 17, 2005

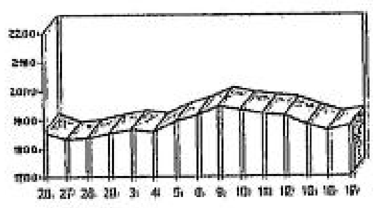
STOCK MARKET

Stocks up on bargain hunting

SHARES yesterday closed higher on bargain hunting after five straight sessions of losses, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 13.88 points, or 0.7 percent, at 1,876.47, after shedding 4.3 percent over the previous five sessions, including Monday's 1.1 percent loss.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B3)

The main contributors to the market's gains were Ayala Corp., up 2.9 percent to P7; Globe Telecom, which advanced by 2.5 percent to P830, and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., which rose 0.7 percent to P1,410.

Capping the market's upside were losses suffered by Holcim, which fell 7.7 percent to P3; Jollibee, down 3.5 percent to P27.50 , and First Holdings, which slipped 2.2 percent to P44 , mainly due to disappointing earnings reports.

Gainers led decliners 38 to 30, while 49 stocks were unchanged.

"The market remains in consolidation in the absence of fresh leads," said Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares.

The market may be looking forward to the enactment of amendments to the value-added tax law which were ratified by Congress last week, said BPI Securities senior manager Roberto Cano. The amendments form the centerpiece of the government's fiscal reform program.

Some opposition lawmakers earlier threatened to question the constitutionality of the standby authority given to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to raise VAT to 12 percent from 10 percent. *AP*

DOTC accuses JBIC exec of irregularity

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications has accused the Philippine representative of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation of inappropriate behavior and complicity in the alleged overpricing of the P31.5-billion Line 2 project of the Light Rail Transit Authority.

In an interview, Transportation and Communication Assistant Secretary Robert Castañares said the agency would file a diplomatic protest against Osamu Murata, chief representative of JBIC, the country's largest soft loan creditor and donor, financing about 60 percent of foreign-assisted projects.

Castañares also said Murata should be declared persona non grata and should be replaced by the JBIC as its country representative.

"I believe that we have had enough of your bullying and constant threat of canceling our loan if we fail to follow your wishes," said Castañares, quoting his own letter to Murata dated May 11. "Please consider this letter as a formal protest against your belligerent behavior."

But Murata strongly denied he was involved in any irregularity.

"The DOTC lacks the understanding on how the JIBC operates," Murata said in an interview.

Castañares said that in the next few days, the department would lodge a formal protest with the Japanese embassy and the JBIC governor at his head office in Japan.

Castañares stressed that the department was not hitting the JBIC as an institution but only its country representative.

Congress is now looking at the overpricing of some of the components of the LRTA's Line 2 project and irregularities on the selection of contractors.

This is the reason why, according to Castañares, the DOTC was carefully evaluating other variation orders related to Line 2. In fact, he said, the 160 variation orders have been booked as early as 2003, but were never submitted to the DOTC for approval.

Line 2 runs from Santolan in Pasig to Recto in Manila.

There are 160 variations or changes to the original design of Line 2 worth P500 million that Murata was pushing for but which the DOTC had not approved after the agency claimed to have sensed the occurrence of some irregularities.

Castañares asked Murata in his letter if "there was a grand conspiracy to cover up the irregularities in the remaining variation orders."

DOTC/B2

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BCDA threatens to take over John Hay complex

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority yesterday said it was seriously considering taking over Camp John Hay from CJH Development Corp. as the latter seemed not inclined to settle P2.2 billion in unpaid rent.

Laywer Lyssa Pagano-Calde, spokesperson of BCDA subsidiary John Hay Management Corp., said in a statement that the state agency was also "finalizing its legal options" regarding CJHDevCo's apparent refusal to pay its debts.

"CJHDevCo's filing a petition for arbitration before the Philippine Dispute Resolution Center Inc., a private organization, may be the final indication that it cannot settle its debts," Calde said.

She said the possible takeover of Camp John Hay "may have become a necessity to protect the assets of the facility in the interest of Baguio City and the national government."

The lawyer said that of the P2.2 billion in unpaid rent, which accumulated since 1997, some P300 million was supposed to fund development projects of Baguio City.

"The group's petition with PDRCI, which is not a judicial court, is extremely unnecessary since BCDA has always been open to its recommendations on how they wish to pay the rental arrears," Calde said.

"But the CJHDevCo offer to reduce the debt to a measly P192,000 is definitely unacceptable," she added.

Further, Calde warned that when BCDA exercised its legal options, these would be coursed through real courts.

BCDA had served CJHDevCo a notice for the firm to settle P1.2 billion of its total debts on or before April 30.

For its part, CJHDevCo senior vice president Georgina A. Alvarez insisted that the BCDA should convene a joint committee to settle the disputes involving the property as provided in their lease contract.

Alvarez, who is also a lawyer, said the BCDA's failure to honor its contractual obligations prompted CJHDevCo to seek PDRCI arbitration.

She said the BCDA should honor its obligations or pay CJHDevCo "P10.9 billion in damages and lost profits."

Also, Alvarez said the BCDA should assure CJHDevCo and other businesses in the John Hay special economic zone from any adverse consequences of a Supreme Court decision that voided tax privileges for locators there.

"When a government promises something to induce a private party to enter into a contract with it, that private party should be able to rest assured that the government's word can be trusted."

CJHDevCo won the 1996 bidding for the John Hay lease contract, when incentives were provided through Presidential Proclamation No. 420 signed by then President Fidel V. Ramos.

According to the Supreme Court, such tax and financial privileges were provided only for the Subic special economic zone.

DOTC accuses JBIC chief of irregularity

From page B1

Castañares said the DOTC had been circumspect in approving the projects, especially those deemed not really crucial, to help ease the government's funding problem.

"Most of the variation orders are unjustifiable," said the DOTC assistant secretary. "The government is in effect, being made to pay for the inefficiency, incompetence and negligence of certain people."

Murata said he would answer the DOTC's letter point-by-point.

"I have not read the letter carefully," Murata said, adding he was in Cebu monitoring a project. "We need to check the facts first then we would reply to the letter."

Castañares claimed that Murata had engaged in inappropriate behavior by trying to discredit Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

Castañares also accused Murata of displaying hostile behavior toward DOTC Undersecretary Guiling Mamondiong.

In his May 11 letter, copies of which he furnished the Japanese ambassador and ranking Philippine officials, Castañares claimed that Murata had been trying to malign Mendoza by writing letters to several lawmakers, implying that the transport secretary was incapable.

Castañares also claimed that Murata called up Mamondiong, the DOTC undersecretary, in his residence at about 11 pm and "ordered [Mamondiong's] wife to wake him up ... [Mamondiong was] shouted and scolded for not endorsing the capex project."

The capex project is the P11-billion, JBIC-funded capacity expansion of the LRT Line 1, which DOTC had suspended due to lack of budget.

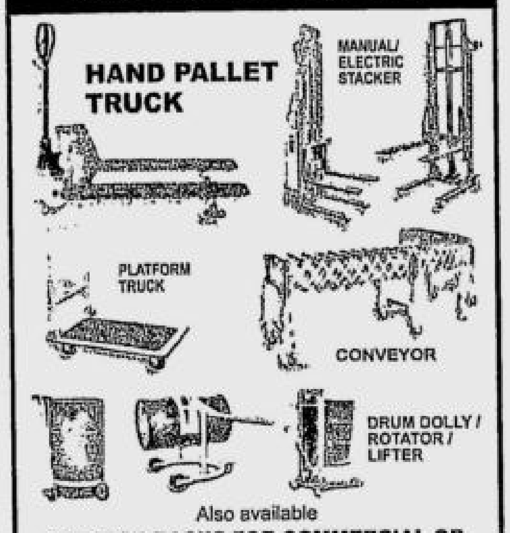
Murata denied badmouthing Mendoza or any DOTC official. He also said that he called up Mamondiong on the mobile phone at 10 p.m. about two months ago.

"I even expressed my apologies for calling very late at night," Murata said. "I didn't shout at [Mamondiong]."

Castañares said the DOTC was curious about Murata's "deafening silence and apparent tolerance on irregularities committed by Japanese contractors" related to the Line 2 controversies.

But Murata said it was the obligation of the DOTC to report to the JBIC any irregularity in a yen-funded project.

"It is the executing agency that must inform the JBIC of such irregularities," stressed Murata. "Up to now, we have not received any official information on these alleged anomalies. The JBIC is taking a strong stand against bribery and corruption."



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DR. NED ROBERTO, PhD is one of Asia's leading authorities on marketing. He is a much sought after consultant, speaker, author, and educator. He has taught at De La Salle University in Manila, Northwestern University in Chicago and INSEAD in France. He was professor of International Marketing at the Asian Institute of Management for 29 years. In 1983, he received the Philippine Marketing Association's Agora Award for Marketing Education, and in 2004, he was awarded the 1st Lifetime Achievement Award as Marketing Educator by the Philippine Association of Marketing Educators.

Dr. Roberto has consulted and conducted in-house seminars for Fortune 500 companies in the U.S., Europe, and Asia such as Procter & Gamble, Citibank, McCann-Erickson, Nestle, AC Nielsen, etc. He is the author (with Philip Kotler) of Social Marketing, which has been translated into seven languages, as well as the best-selling User-Friendly Marketing Research and several other books and countless papers on marketing.

Dr. Roberto earned his MBA and PhD in Marketing at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business.

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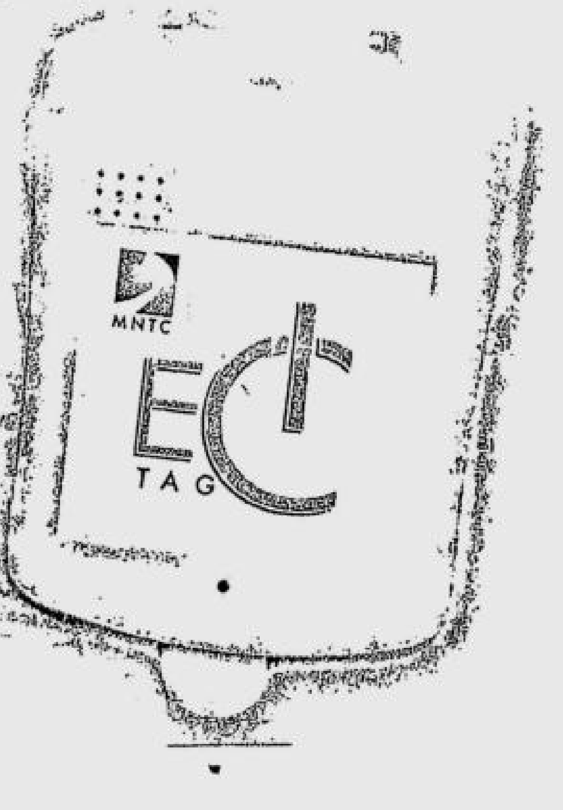
NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of SEAFRONT RESOURCES CORPORATION will be held at Rooms 527-528 YIAS, Level 5 Podium 4, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Cor. Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenues, Makati City on Monday June 20, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. The order of business at said meeting will be as follows:

1. Certification of Service of Notice;
2. Determination of Quorum/Call to Order;
3. Approval of the Minutes of the last Stockholders' Meeting held on 26 May 2004;
4. Approval of Management Report and the 2004 Audited Financial Report contained in the 2004 Annual Report;
5. Confirmation and Ratification of all acts, contracts and investments made and entered into by Management and/or Board of Directors during the period of 26 May 2004 to 20 June 2005
6. Election of Nine (9) members of the Board of Directors for the ensuing year(including Independent Directors);
7. Appointment of External Auditors;
8. Other Matters; and
9. Adjournment.

Please be advised that the record date of stockholders entitled to vote at said meeting shall be 20 May 2005. Registration for the meeting shall commence at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, June 20, 2005 at the above venue.

(Sgd.) GUIA SANTOS-QUA
Corporate Secretary



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Today wins Standard struggle

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

AFTER three months of internecine maneuverings, the Today editorial crew has emerged from the merger battle victorious, despite their paper having been bought out and folded into the Manila Standard.

Standard editor in chief Jullie Yap Daza announced her resignation the other night before a tense staff meeting and, if you believe the pro-Jullie grapevine, her departure had already been foreshadowed after she rejected a management offer to give up her editorial functions in return for continuing her column and a consultancy position.

Daza's retirement should pave the way for the return of Lourdes Molina-Fernandez, a Today import who was to have been the merged papers' executive editor until toilet tactics from resistant staffers caused her to hand in her resignation over a month ago.

Despite making herself scarce, the management has made itself known that it was still keeping the door open for Molina-Fernandez's return.

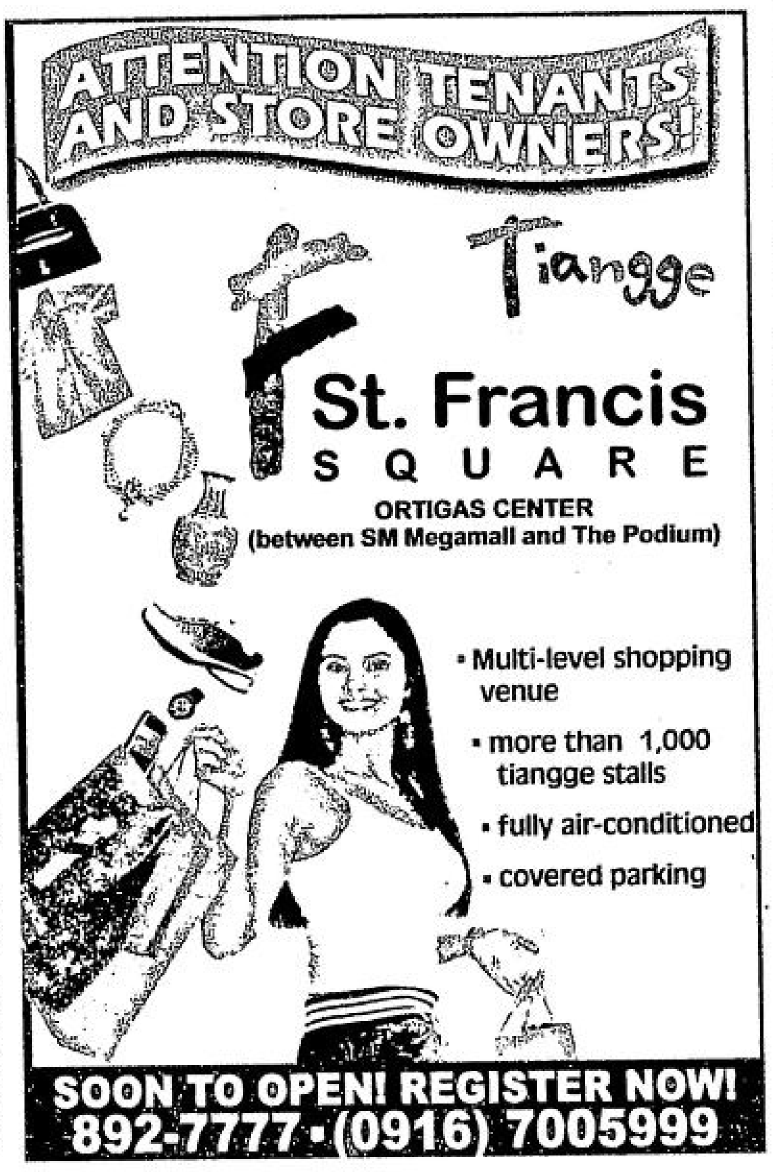
Asked about the rumor that Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. was also quitting as publisher as a quid pro quo for Daza's departure, the Standard principal, Enrique Razon Jr., curtly replied, "I have not heard of that one."

Meanwhile, the short-lived business editor, Daxim Lucas, whose abrupt departure was followed by Molina-Fernandez, has indicated his willingness to return but as a banking reporter, which he was at Today before the merger.

According to the pro-Jullie grapevine, Daza just might resurrect within the desequestered Journal Group to join her old boss, Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, who is apparently trying to revive the late '70s editorial core group, despite their now senior citizen status.

The former ambassador has already entrusted the Journal's business affairs to his lawyer-son, Ferdinand Martin, who juggles his time between Equitable PCIBank trying to make the Gos live up to their corporate governance principles and the Manila Golf Club, where he sits as chair of an even more fractious and contentious group.

COCKTALES/ B5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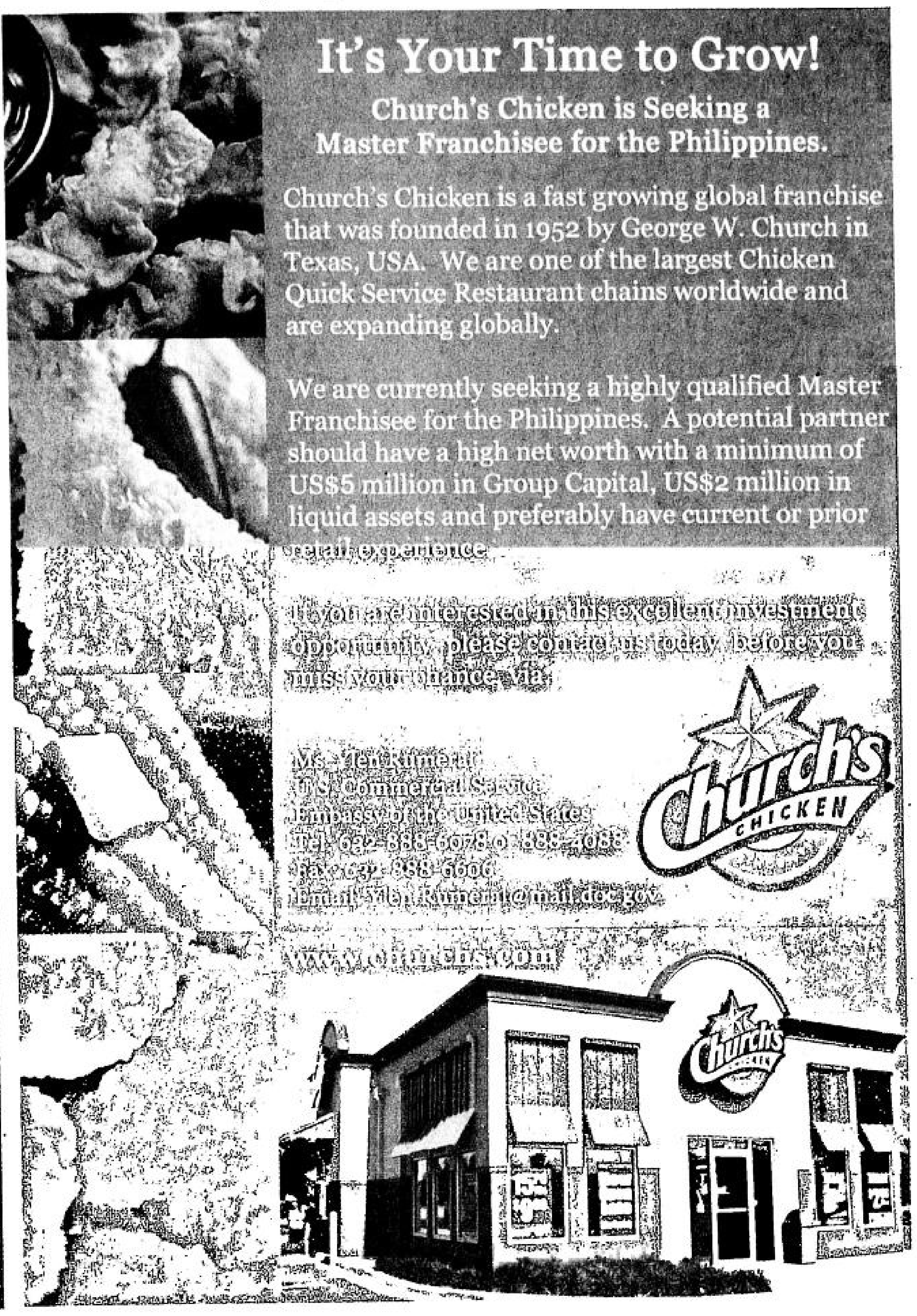
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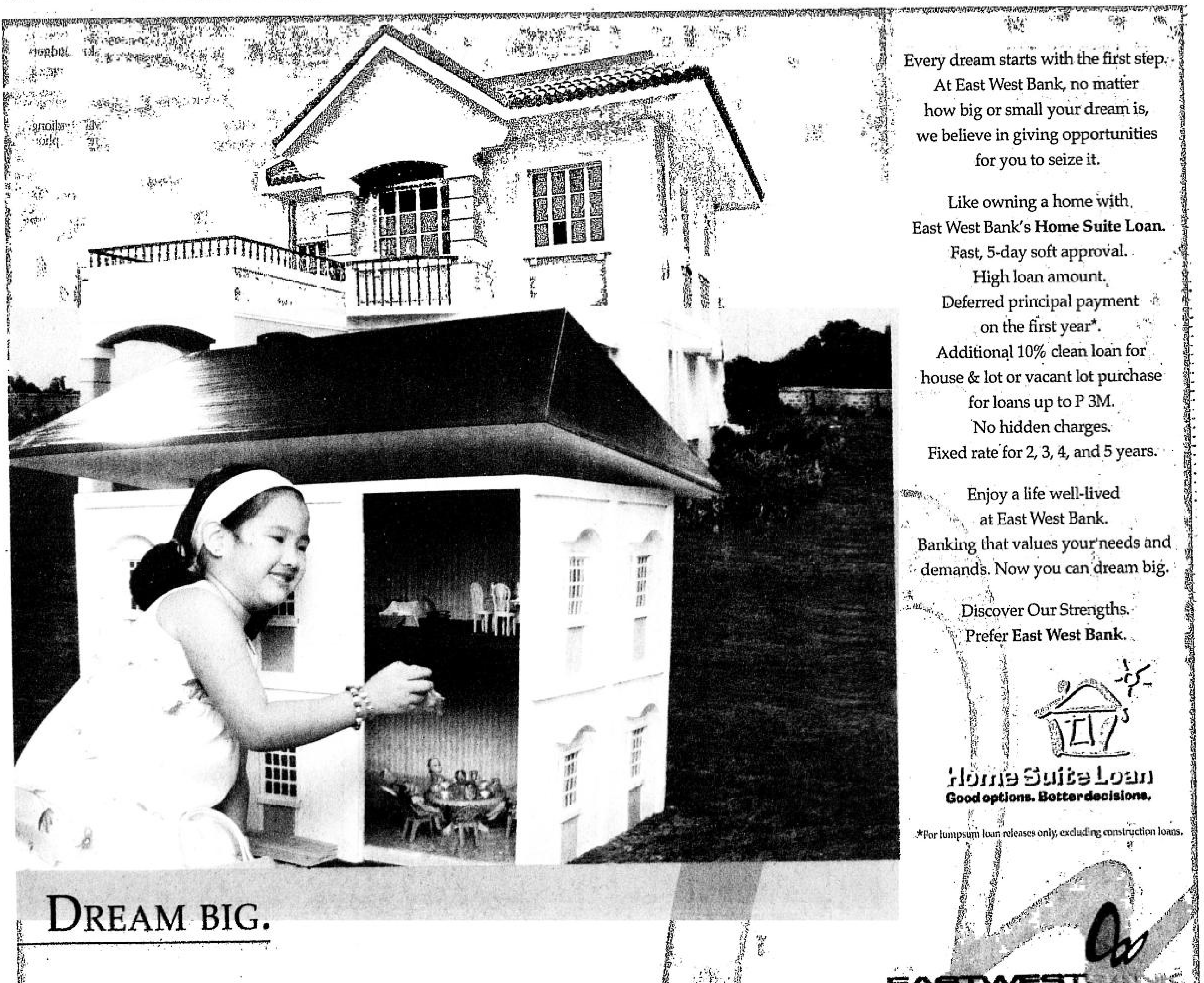
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BSP studies measures to cut remittance cost

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is studying measures that will reduce the cost of remitting cash to the country to encourage migrant Filipinos to use formal money transfer channels.

In an interview, BSP officer in charge Amando Tetangco Jr. said the institution had started discussions with the Association of Bank Remittance Officers (Abroi) on ways to trim down the cost of sending money to the country.

An International Monetary Fund study earlier said the money remittance usually costs 5 to 10 percent or more of the amount transferred.

In the case of the Philippines, despite being the third biggest recipient of migrant remittances next to Mexico and India, the average cost was placed at 13.5 percent, one of the highest in the world next to Bangladesh (16 percent), Turkey and Bosnia & Herzegovina (15 percent) and Morroco (14 percent).

Transaction cost is lower in high-volume markets such as Mexico (about 7 percent).

"We're discussing how to address this," Tetangco said. "In the case of Mexico, they've gotten some concessions with the US."

He explained there was an identification system recognized by the US banks that gave Mexican migrant workers in the US, even those who were not registered, access to remittance services.

"We're also looking at how to improve access of some of the workers to banking services in countries such as the US," he said.

Tetangco said the use of formal financial institutions would provide accessible, timely and safe channel for remittance transactions and could help promote better saving habits among OFWs.

Based on a study on the Mexican experience, he said remittances held as deposits in the banking system had a multiplier effect of about two to three times as the funds could be used for investments in businesses, including small and microbusinesses.

In view of a separate Asian Development Bank study that said that inflows from OFWs were hardly contributing to economic output growth, the BSP had proposed to Malacañang the creation of an inter-agency committee to push for specific programs for OFWs.

The Philippines has been relying on huge remittances from OFWs to boost domestic consumer demand.

PNOC unit bags $5.7-M deal

By Abigail L. Ho

STATE-RUN Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) recently bagged a $5.7-million drilling contract in Lihir Island, Papua New Guinea.

Lihir Island gold mining operations manager Lihir Management Co. (LMC) commissioned PNOC-EDC to drill geothermal and dewatering wells in the island in 12 months.

The state firm went against Papua New Guinea's Zenex Drilling and Australia's Century Drilling for the contract. PNOC-EDC had an early indication of the award when LMC officials, in early March, asked the company to do a rig inspection.

PNOC-EDC is now setting up the necessary machinery, equipment, materials and supplies for the 12-month drilling contract, the fourth of its kind with LMC over the past several years.

Since its first contract with LMC, PNOC-EDC has drilled a total of 28 geothermal wells and 10 dewatering wells, as well as reworked three wells and deepened six wells in Lihir Island.

"PNOC-EDC's drilling services continue to be a profitable venture for the company. Our annual revenue comparison shows an average 10-percent yearly increase in our drilling income," PNOC-EDC president and chief executive Paul Aquino said in a statement yesterday.

He said that between 1999 and 2003, PNOC-EDC had earned nearly P1 billion in revenue from the three consecutive LMC contracts, translating to almost P400 million in net income for the company.

PNOC-EDC started exporting its drilling services in 1997 by taking on an oil and gas drilling venture in Indonesia. In 2003, the Bangladesh Petroleum and Exploration Co. contracted the state firm for drilling rig rehabilitation works there.

The state firm had also sent rigs, as well as drilling consultants and rig maintenance specialists to Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

Locally, PNOC-EDC also does some work for the Philippine Geothermal Inc.

PNOC-EDC owns and operates seven drilling rigs.

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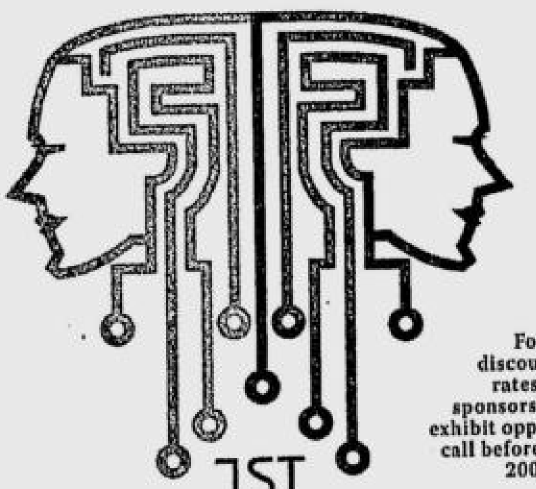

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SLIGHT GROWTH

SMC income hit P1.78B in Q1

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL Corp., Southeast Asia's largest food and beverage firm, reported a slight 2 percent growth in first quarter net income to P1.78 billion, from P1.74 billion in the same period last year.

SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. said during the company's stockholder's meeting at the Valle Verde Country Club in Pasig that the higher cost of fuel and electricity jacked up the cost of raw materials.

"Our company remains strong. We weren't ready for this. There was the value-added tax, and electricity and fuel costs were higher," Cojuangco said in Filipino.

SMC, however, did not disclose yesterday by how much expenses increased during the period.

It only reported that revenues for the first quarter were up 21 percent to P47.2 billion, and that operating income climbed 16 percent to P3.84 billion.

Cojuangco also said SMC would likely limit its earnings growth to 2 percent if it focused its expansion solely on the Philippines.

"If we are here in the Philippines, the most we can expect is a 2 percent growth. By going regional, we will attain higher growth," Cojuangco said.

COJUANGCO

Should it complete its buy-in into Australian dairy giant National Foods Ltd., Cojuangco told stockholders that SMC would source 21 percent of its revenues from the Australian company.

SMC is buying a majority stake in National Foods, which it has valued at $1.9 billion.

SMC also said that Berri Ltd. would be SMC's flagship company for regional juice brands.

Cojuangco also said SMC had earmarked P15 billion for expansion overseas.

He said South China, Vietnam, Malaysia and Australia represented "huge growth prospects" for SMC.

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Cocktales

From page B3

But those are two different stories worth telling some other time.

McDo's new sizzle

MCDONALD'S Philippine franchisee George Yang seems to have gotten back his groove, now that his group has bought out the Americans and removed them from day-to-day operations.

Yang yesterday formally opened a branch of the US hamburger chain on Emerald Street in Ortigas; another branch, at the People Support building built in front of the Makati Med, is scheduled to open tomorrow.

Both branches, like the ones in Greenbelt and Paseo de Roxas, are 24/7 operations, thanks to the booming call center industry that has spawned all-day, all-night businesses like 7-Elevens and Mini Stops and filled up office buildings and residential condos in Legaspi and Salcedo villages as well.

McDonald's success in locating in key commercial sites of Metro Manila and its fresh design looks and management systems are apparently still of keen interest to no less than Jollibee CEO Tony Tan Caktiong.

Tan, who does not hide the fact that his Jollibee operations and success were inspired by the American fast-food giant, was seen on the very first day of the soft launch of the Emerald branch, inspecting the new seats, color scheme and work flow of the 150-seater hamburger restaurant.

According to an eyewitness, Tan even lined up to buy himself a McFlurry.

Money-go-round

- TARLAC will have its own SM Mall branch by 2007, to be built near Max's Restaurant by the fork of the McArthur Highway and the inner road going into the city proper.
- JUDGING from the size of the crowds that lined up the different Toyota branches on Sunday waiting for a test drive despite the scorching sun, the Japanese automaker seems to have another winner in its new Fortuner SUV.

Heard through the grapevine

BATANGAS Vice Gov. Ricky Recto has been ousted as presiding chair of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan by rebellious board members, who passed this year's provincial budget. It was immediately approved by Gov. Armando Sanchez in Recto's absence.

In addition, the provincial board also changed the day of the weekly meeting from Tuesday, Recto's preference, to Thursday.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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Cinema 3 - 11:40 am, 2:30 pm, 5:20, 8:10, 11:00
Cinema 4 - 1:00 pm, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30
Cinema 5 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Cinema 2 - 1:00 pm, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
Cinema 3 - 10:30 am, 1:30 pm, 4:30, 7:30,10:30

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 - 12:40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10
Cinema 2 - 11:45 am, 2:35 pm, 5:25, 8:15, 11:05
Cinema 3 - 12:10 pm, 3:00, 11:30
Cinema 6 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 7 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40

GREENBELT 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 8:15
Cinema 2 - 1:15 pm, 4:05, 6:55, 9:00

GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 2 - 2:10 pm, 5:00, 10:40
Cinema 3 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40, 12:30
Cinema 4 - 12:40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10, 12:00
Cinema 5 - 12:15 pm, 3:05, 5:55, 11:35

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Cinema 6 - 12:50 pm, 3:40, 6:30, 9:20
Cinema 7 - 1:20 pm, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

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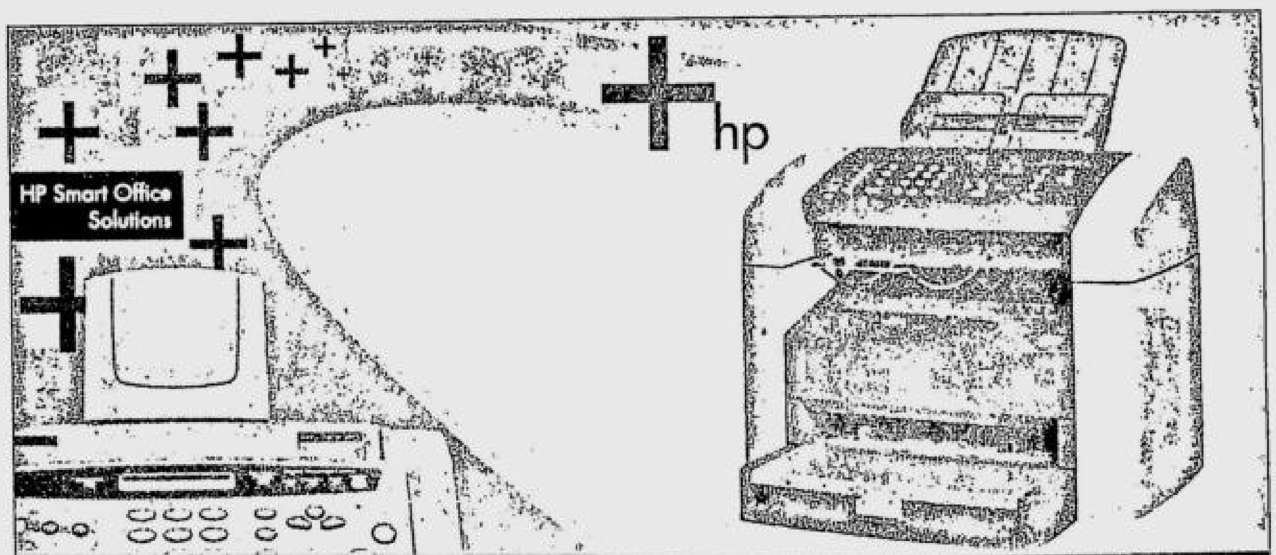

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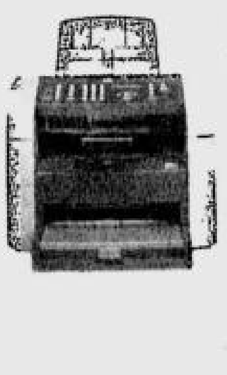

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BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	13,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28	28	28	28	350,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48	48.5	47.5	48.5	714,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.65	1,220,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	47	46.5	47	61,000
International Exch. Bank	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	228,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	33	32	32	590,400
Philippine National Bank	32.5	33	32.5	33	25,500
Security Bank Corp.	25	27.5	25	27.5	22,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	5,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	30,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	290	290	290	290	120
Manulife Financial Corp.	2430	2450	2430	2450	1,140
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	1,550,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1610	1630	1610	1630	330
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	13	12.5	13	262,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.06	2,020,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	3,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	815	830	815	830	148,720
Ipeople Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.65	55,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	746,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1410	1420	1400	1410	104,690
Ivantage Corp.	0.6	0.62	0.6	0.62	580,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	18,000,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16	16	16	8,100
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23.5	23	23.25	222,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.6	4,707,000
Petron Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.35	769,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	10,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.08	142,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2,940,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	570,000
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Holcim Philippines Inc.	3	3.15	3	3	248,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	61,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	762,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	27.5	27.5	145,600
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	60,600
San Miguel Corp. B	85	86	85	86	129,300
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	40,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	6,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	45,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7	7	7	7	1,106,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.45	370,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.65	4.65	4.6	4.6	907,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.03	7,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2	2	1.96	1.96	5,000,000
APC Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,300,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	350,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1	1	17,050,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	1,190,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	2,140,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.55	2.38	2.42	2,734,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8	8	8	130,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45	45	43.5	44	1,676,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.085	0.09	0.085	0.09	5,500,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.4	59,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	42,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.36	1.32	1.36	806,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	36,900,000
Polar Property Holdings	2	2	2	2	20,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	500,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.21	0.24	.0.21	0.24	240,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	247	248	246	248	860,710
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.175	4,330,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	160,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.4	1.18	1.4	4,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.105	0.11	0.1	0.11	1,400,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	8,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.14	4,484,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	70,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.26	1.26	3,471,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	215,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	1,350,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	12.25	12.75	12	12.5	413,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	5,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.4	9,437,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	900,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2,010,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	4,540,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.5	4,014,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.21	480,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	730,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5	5	5	5	1,010,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	120,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.3	1,183,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.8	0.8	0.75	0.75	270,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	30,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.35	4.4	4.25	4.25	96,000
Benguet Corp. A	8	8	8	8	26,000
Benguet Corp. B	45	45	45	45	200
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.05	3.05	3	3	13,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,240,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	590,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.014	48,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	45,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	381,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1	1	0.96	1	740,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	28.5	27	28.5	2,310,700
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	19,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.48	2.5	2.48	2.48	160,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.145	3,220,000

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CEU to expand into hospital operations

By Doris C. Dumlao

PUBLICLY listed Centro Escolar University plans to invest about P1 billion in hospital operations.

Also, CEU is planning to start offering courses in medicine.

A company source told the INQUIRER that CEU, jointly controlled by the Echauz family and Chinese-Filipino businessman Emilio Yap, was scouting for a hospital to acquire although it was also open to putting up its own.

"There will be a natural synergy for us if we own a hospital because we can start offering medicine," a well-placed company source said.

The source added that CEU, which is known for its dentistry and other allied courses, would also like to start training doctors.

Aside from dentistry, CEU which has campuses in Manila, Makati and Malolos currently offers medical-related courses such as science, pharmacy, nursing, optometry, tourism, family economics, nutrition, education, music, liberal arts, social work, accountancy, management and technology.

The source said the non-sectarian university had enough funds to invest about P1 billion in hospital operations.

CEU is expected to finance its plans with cash generated by operations.

The university houses 12 buildings that can accommodate 20,000 students per year.

The Yap and Echauz families control about 55 percent of CEU. Another 24-percent stake is owned by the Tionco family, while the remaining 18 percent is held by the public.

CEU earlier planned to raise as much as P3 billion from an initial public offering.

While it had been listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange since the 1980s, it has yet to hold an IPO.

CEU was established in June 3, 1907 by Doña Librada Avelino and Doña Carmen de Luna, two philanthropists who had dreamt of establishing a nationalistic center of learning for Filipino women.

MWCI signs service deal with India firm

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE EAST zone is no longer big enough for Manila Water Company Inc., which recently signed a management service contract with a water distribution company in Tiripur, India.

"The company has sent two company engineers to India for the preliminary engineering works and some pre-qualification processes. We are closely coordinating with our partner United Utilities Plc. on this project," said MWCI president Antonino T. Aquino.

Aquino said the contract with the Indian firm was the type of arrangement that MWCI wanted to enter into as part of its diversification program.

He said MWCI was looking to sign similar contracts involving water utility services in other Southeast Asian countries.

In the meantime, MWCI is looking into other water distribution projects in the provinces.

Aquino said MWCI was still pursuing the Carmen bulk water supply project for Metro Cebu, which will cost about P1. 8 billion.

The project had been given the first pass approval by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Aquino said the project would involve the development of the Luyang River as a water source for Metro Cebu.

The Carmen project will increase the Metro Cebu Water District's water supply by 35 percent or 50,000 cubic meters a day.

"We are now awaiting the approval of the Cebu Water District," he said.

He also confirmed the company's plan to acquire a major stake in west zone distributor, Maynilad Water Services Inc.

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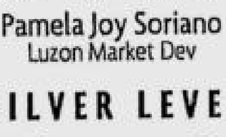

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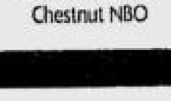

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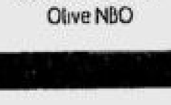

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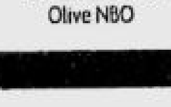

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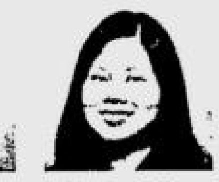
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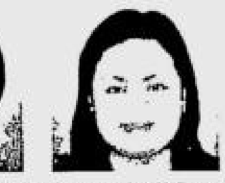
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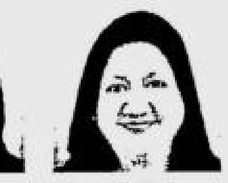
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MASSAGE 8547144 VICTOR

★Mr BODY PHYSIQUE★ 11A Kamias QC 4350978

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RELAXING MASSAGE 8978214

THAI Msge Lic 0921-7569278

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HOUSEHOLD JOBS

A'A MAID & YAYA 4386920

All arnd Maid Yaya 4399290

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EXP MAIDS w/ NBI 4398468

Help Agency 5328376 • 5321947

H'WORKING MAIDS 421-3828

LOW RATE MAID YAYA 4334448

NEED MAIDS 09155544777 / 4325125

PACIFIC: MAIDS, ETC SINCE 1948 T:7312672

Trusted Maids w/NBI 4392490

Trusted Maids Yaya H-Boy7572089

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L-BAHAY 9206784 4540520

Cheap 9260424/09272207969

Lipat 6817623 ★ 6817136

P1200/TRIP 742-14-57

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMM'L/RESD'L

MANILA

Income Property Nr UST 250sq.m P8M 0917-5213838

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO 1st Class CONDOTEL pool gym park 1-3BR Penthse 1.8M up 3yrs 0% int 9189235216

★KATIPUNAN Ext Coml/Resl nr UP Ateneo 204 to 1,200m² P8,500 up/m² 0918-9235216

HOUSE & LOT

LAS PINAS

Las Pinas Pilar VII 265 Sqm 3 Stry Prime Loc 6BR 7T&B 2 Tel.4 Carport near Alab Twn Cntr 6.8M 0917 8507252

MANILA

SAN ANDRES MANILA Bnew Twnhse/3stry/3br/4tb/1-2grge P3.860M up 8903461 loc 34

MARIKINA

Bnew 3BR 3TB 2.8M 9487112

PROVIDENT MARIKINA near gate w/ 3hses owner leaving P5M neg RUSH 948-8240

QUEZON CITY

Filinvest2 Cor. 112m² 3br SFurn 0915-4057078 Jun

Hse 4 Sale 2stry 4BR 4TB 2car grge Tel 8114071 8236047

NEW MLA 3BR 3T&B P16M, 17M & 20M 0917-7499447

New Mla New Hse: LA199 FA375 6br 5tb 2cg P14M 711-9051

ST IGNATIUS VIL nr Eastwood, corner lot 13M 6BR 400m² Direct Buyers 912-0312 • 995-0925

SAN JUAN

L.MENCIAS NR P. GUEVARRA Bnew Twnhse/3stry/3br/3-4tb/mdsrm/1-2 GRGE P3.655M up 8903461

BULACAN

1800/mo-20yrs Tel 9390299

3,400/mo-25yrs Tel 5208410

LAGUNA

Hse & Lot Sta Rosa Laguna Bel-Air Edna 0917-8312369

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1.1 M NR MAKATI ORTIGAS 10T/mo or 4 yrs 0% Int 10% DP Move-In 2-4 BR Bank & Pag-Ibig Ok 0920-6348545

1.1M C5 Nr The Fort 10T/mo. or 4Yrs. No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8313226

RENT TO OWN! CONDO nr. Fort & Makati 2-4BR Fully Secured w/ High Class Amenities 16K M/A 10%DP to Move-In Pls Call 0915-7447911

CONDO nr. D'Fort nr Makati/Ortigas CBDs 10%DP Move-In 1st Class Amenities Mark 0921-8165150

HAMPTONS PLACE RFO 2007 Global City P2.4 - P6.7M 0917-5213838

MAKATI PRIME TOWER FULLY FURN. 24SQ 1.15M 09217985148

MAKATI/MLA. CONDO SALE /RENT 0920-2403601

Mktl condo RFO 09212015989

Oriental Gardens Makati 45.5m² 2.7&up Roselyn 0920-3843962

RENT 2 OWN 2BR P14T RFO 0921-5093620, 0928-2473987

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

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MAKATI

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STUDIO 50sm w/prkng 2.7M Neg 0918-9132396

MANILA

BAY GARDEN ROXAS BLVD 1,2,3BR 0920-9602940 RFO

ESPANA TOWER nr UST 999Tup 6873372/0917-8102903

MALATE 2BR facing BAY 6.5M NEG T-0918-9132396

MANDALUYONG

CONDO, BNEW, 09192189817

One Sapphire 1.2M-3.1M 687-3372 / 0917-8102903

PASIG

CONDO nr. Ortigas & Mktl RFO 10%DP • 0915-5812705

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QUEZON CITY

ALPHA VICTORIA NEW MLA LA116 FA236 8M 0917-5213838

Cubao P1.5M Terms 9126976

Nr West Ave New TwnHse: LA115 FA220 3br 3tb 2cg P6.2M 7119051

Priced to Sell 4br 3tb New Manila 0917-5213838

SAN JUAN

MANDALUYONG NR SHAW Bnew Twnhse.3stry.3br.3-4tb.mdsrm/1-2grge P3.655M up 8903461

Nr. Greenhills Thse Big 7239126

OTHER AREAS

Boracay Condotel 3.8M EARN P520T/Yr. ROI 5Yrs. P75T/mo. or 1Yr. No Interest Fully Furnished 0917-8169849

TAGUIG

D' FORT 307 FA REGENT TOWER 29 FLR. VIEW FULLY FURNISH 4BDRM 5BA www.MetroManila.Info 09178550566/8162021

LOT

MAKATI

FORT BONIFACIO P5,000 MO/1 YR ONLY US MEMORIAL CONCEPT 8866472 09209220174

PARANAQUE

100,200m². Financing Avail. nr Rodriguez St. Moonwalk 09206540954

CAVITE

West Bay Homes Near SM Bacoor (02) 2598074/0927-7983239

Eagle Ridge Fairway w/golf share 6873372/0917-8102903

LAGUNA

192&271m². Adj. Financing Avail. Southpeak1, San Pedro 09206540954

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CONDO/TWNHSE

CAVITE

LOT

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Brgy. Poblacion Mercado St. Corner Lot 1078 sqm One Block from Makati/Kalayaan Avenue
PARAÑAQUE CITY
East Service Rd Lot 791 sqm Between Sucat/Bicutan Exits Near Brittany Posadas Village
MUNTINLUPA CITY
Alabang Hills Don Manolo BlvdLot 800 sqm Nr San Beda / New Life Center / Alabang Medical
LAGUNA
Biñan Town/Country Southville Paris St. Two (2) Lots 75 sqm each
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Cell: 0919-6745430

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

QUEZON CITY

Scout 2-Sty House 3723326

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1BR fully-furnished 25T Bnew Condo near Ayala 4108395 / 0919-8504468

GREENBELT/Salcedo Stu 1,2, 3br FF 20Tup 0917-851-1193

PASIG

Ortigas FF New Condo Hi-end Amen. 0920-9617883

APARTMENT

KALOOCAN

EDSA CALOOCAN 3FLRS COML W/BODEGA 3612663 3610652

MAKATI

2BR 1TB TBL GRGE STRNG H20 8244115 09153202799

WAREHOUSE/FACTORY

700/450/250m² 09178863211

700/450/250m² 09178863211

ROOM & BOARD

•FURNISH PASAY 8872865•

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Lagro 20m² 6T 0917-8863211

LOAN & MORTGAGE

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MAKATI

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3. Or Call Tel. Nos.: 912-3010 / 911-8417

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Must know how to prepare pleadings

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303 Delta Bldg., West Ave. cor. Quezon Ave., Q.C.

CAPITOL MASONIC CORPORATION

Notice of Annual stockholders' Meeting

The Capitol Masonic Corporation will hold its 47th ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING on Saturday, May 21, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the Capitol Masonic Temple, Katarungan cor. Kalayaan Ave., Diliman, Quezon City (behind Shell Service Station).

Stockholders unable to personally attend may send their Proxy/ies before the meeting to the Corporate Secretary at the Mezzanine Floor, CMC Bldg., 35 Matalino St., Diliman, Quezon City, Telephone Number 929-5110

(Sgd) BENEDICTO A. MADARANG
Director / Corporate Secretary

(PDI-May 18, 2005)

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

CONDO/TWHSE/FOR SALE/RENT

MAKATI

Makati Manila RFO CONDO Sale / Rent 15K up 09176266516

HOUSE & LOT

LAS PINAS

Duplex 109M² 3.5M 2855129

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

MAZDA

'97 323Speed A/T A1 0917-8192224

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NISSAN SENTRA NO DOWN P.
X-TRAIL 70DP
URVAN SHUTTLE 95T. D.P.
CP 09178535916

Owner Leaving 01 Frontier 4x2 M/T P500T Neg 0919-8707359

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CARS FOR RENT

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1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 6959454

2% w/out taking car 6567685

2% w/out taking car 5315577

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

OTHER EQUIPMENT

DENTAL UNIT 20T 531-9272

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DOG TRAINER 0919-3419012

GOLDEN RET PUPS 7263158

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Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION

The University of the Philippines System invites interested parties/ contractors/ developers to submit proposals and enter into negotiated procurement to lease and develop the North Science and Technology Park Phase I, consisting of 37.5 hectares, more or less, located along Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City pursuant to Sections 53 and 35 of Republic Act No. 9184.

The UP S&T Park offers access to the University's academic resources, IT infrastructure, support services, and many other unique location advantages, such as: research-active PhD faculty, specialized research and training laboratories, specialized libraries in different fields, computing facilities, fiberoptic network, training rooms and short- and long-term accommodation facilities; and sports, shopping and community amenities.

Project proponents should be duly registered and existing corporations and/or consortia with strong financial capability and a minimum net worth of PhP1 Billion for 2004, at least 50% Filipino-owned and with relevant experience in undertaking projects on a similar scale as the proposed development. A formal proposal for the planning, development and management of the Project shall include a detailed plan for developing the property as a prospective lessee for 25 years. The proposal shall conform to the land use plan, S&T conceptual framework plan, and development plans of UP; and include an implementation schedule, amount and timing of investment outlays, and detailed level of resource commitment. These information shall be contained in the proposal consisting of two parts: the technical proposal and the financial proposal.

Forms and Terms of Reference (TOR) may be obtained from the UP S&T Park Secretariat, Office of the Vice-President for Development (OVPD), 3/F Quezon Hall, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P3,000.00. Deadline for submission of technical and financial proposals will be on Monday, August 1, 2005. After the evaluation of the documents submitted, the developers shall be duly notified of the schedule of subsequent activities. For inquiries, please call Tel/Fax No. 928-2888; or Tel 981-8500 loc. 2506 or 2542 (c/o Ms. Nelda G. Gutierrez) email: nelda.gutierrez@up.edu.ph

The University reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals or parts thereof, to waive any required formality in the proposals received, or to accept such proposals or to award any part thereof to any proponent/s whose proposal/s is/are considered most advantageous to the University. The University assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify any firm for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of proposals, nor does it guarantee that a selection will be made.

(Sgd.)**RAFAEL A. RODRIGUEZ**
Vice-President for Development

(PDI - May 18 & 19, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR THE LEASE OF OFFICE SPACE FOR THE PHILHEALTH CENTRAL OFFICE
No. 2005-005-g

The **Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)**, through its Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services (BAC-GS), wishes to invite duly licensed lessors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Lease of Office Space for the PhilHealth Central Office** with the following specifications:

Location

The location of the building and/or office space for the PhilHealth Central Office shall be along Shaw Boulevard, and within the Five Hundred (500) meter radius from the Rizal Capitol, so as not to cause inconvenience to the PhilHealth clientele who have already been familiar with the present location of the Office.

The location must also be within a Hundred (100) Meter radius from commercial banks and other government agencies.

The location must not be prone to flooding.

Space Requirement

The total rentable space requirement shall be from 10,600 sq.m. to 11,000 sq.m. including a space at the ground floor of around 320 sq.m. to 350 sq.m. intended for the PhilHealth Members Assistance Center (PMAC). The office spaces must have a height from floor to ceiling of at least 2.4 meters.

Period of Contract

The term of contract shall be for a period of two (2) years, specifically from **August 1, 2005 to July 31, 2007**, subject to renewal.

The approved budget for the two-year contract for Lease of this Office Space is **Php 70,776,000.00** coming from **C.O.B. 2005.**

Bid documents can be obtained from **May 18 to June 1, 2005**, 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office, (Room 1804) 18th floor, PHILHEALTH, Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Php10,000.00.**

A pre-bid conference will be held on **June 2, 2005 at 1:30p.m.** at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office.

Deadline of Submission of bids will be on **June 16, 2005 at 12:00 noon** at the office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of Bids will follow at **1:30 p.m.** at the same date and venue. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). **Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.**

(Sgd.) **OCTAVINO Q. ESGUERRA**
Senior Vice President and Chief Actuary
Chairperson, BAC for Goods and Services

(PDI--May 18 & 25, 2005)

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

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Massuer 18-25yo 09204540607

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

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(Item No. CCD0001-01)

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All interested applicants MUST possess the necessary Master's Degree,have at least 4 years management and supervision experience and at least 24 hours of training in management and supervision, and possess Career Service Professional or Second Level Eligibility.

Comprehensive CVs must be submitted on or before May 30, 2005 c/o THE MANAGER, Organizational Management and Placement Division, 3rd Floor, Building. 1, Quezon Avenue cor. BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

(PDI--May 18, 2005)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late CARMEN V. BERTOLANO has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No 241; Page No. 49; Book No. XLVIII; Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Donato Mangulat.
PDI-May 18, 25& June 1,2005

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FAX CV 7244588 T-7229454

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that Seaworld Marine Services Inc. a corporation duly organized and existing under Philippine laws, with office address at Unit 4B Transphil House, 1177 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City, has a pending application for Manning License, Seabased from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

The Shareholders of the Corporation are as follows;

Capt. Rommel T. Gacutan – President/ CEO
Ms. Marilou R. Cuyugan-Gacutan - Member
Ms. Rosemarie C. Carbonell-Gacutan - Treasurer
Ms. Marcelina C. Espino-Gacutan - Member
Atty Jay D. Retoriano - Secretary

This is being published in compliance with the requirement for licensing of POEA.

(PDI--May 18, 2005)

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Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR 2005-2007
ITB No. 2005-009-s

The **Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)**, through its Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services (BAC-GS), wishes to invite duly licensed Companies or Business firms to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of **JANITORIAL SERVICES at its Central Office, and its Service Offices for Manila, Quezon City, and Las Piñas for the year 2005 to 2007.**

The approved budget for this two-year contract of janitorial services is **Php 18,396,685.44** coming from **C.O.B. 2005.**

Bid documents can be obtained from **May 18 to June 1, 2005**, 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office, (Room 1804) 18th floor, PHILHEALTH, Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Php10,000.00.**

A pre-bid conference will be held on **June 7, 2005 at 1:30p.m.** at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office.

Deadline of **Submission of Bids** will be on **June 21, 2005 at 12:00 noon** at the office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). **Opening of Bids** will follow at **1:30 p.m.** at the same date and venue. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

(Sgd.) OCTAVINO Q. ESGUERRA
Senior Vice President and Chief Actuary
Chairperson, BAC for Goods and Services

(PDI--May 18 & 25, 2005)

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Aircons, Washing machines, Hair Dryers, Blenders, Water dispensers, rice cookers
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May 18-22, 2005
MC Home Depot
Global City, Taguig
10:00am-8:00pm

For more details please call ABCI at 750-7336

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at the Millennium & Pandanggo Halls, Manila Hotel (17-18) May)

Over 70 Exhibitors to participate in the Conference, **be one of them!**
Participation Fee is at Php 20,000 per booth

Standard Booth Size (2m x 3m x 7ft), each booth is equipped with:
- 2 monobloc chairs
- 1 information table
- booth carpet
- company name (cut-out styro) on fascia board
- 1 fluorescent lamp (40 watts)
- 1 convenient outlet (220 volts-2 gang)

Also featuring The 2nd President Emeritus Golf Cup
Thursday, 12 May 2005, 8:00 am
West Course, Wack Wack Golf & Country Club
Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City

GOLF SPONSORSHIP Php20,000 PARTICIPATION FEE: Php2,500

REGISTRATION

ECOP Member	
A. Individual	Php 4,500.00
B. Group (Min. of 5 pax)	Php 4,000.00
Non-ECOP Member	
A. Individual	Php 5,200.00
B. Group (Min. of 5 pax)	Php 4,500.00

We have invited distinguished personalities from the business, government and academe.

Exciting RAFFLE PRIZES & GIVE-AWAYS await lucky participants!

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WATERFRONT HOTELS & CASINOS
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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION
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Holcim
BAYANTEL
FEDERATION OF FILIPINO-CHINESE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, INC.
ZESTO THE NO. 1 JUICE DRINK
Bank of Commerce
MIRANT

For details, please contact the NCEXXVI Secretariat
at tel / fax nos.: (02) 897-9498 / 897-4656 / 897-4010 / 890-5005
or at e-mail address: nce26@ecop.org.ph
visit our website: www.geocities.com / nce26ecop

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
EMPLOYERS CONFEDERATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

Republic of the Philippines
Sorsogon State College
Sorsogon, Sorsogon
Tel. (056) 211-18-69 Fax (056) 211-18-45

THE SORSOGON STATE COLLEGE (SSC) GOVERNING BOARD

announces the opening of the

SEARCH FOR THE SORSOGON STATE COLLEGE (SSC) PRESIDENT

Minimum Qualifications:
1. Filipino Citizen
2. A holder of an EARNED doctoral degree in any related academic field;
3. Must have five (5) years managerial and administrative experience;
4. Recognized leadership in his/her profession;
5. Morally upright and never been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;
6. Preferably not more than sixty (60) years old at the time of the application.

In addition to the above qualifications, applicants must submit the following documentary requirements in six (6) copies:

a. Letter of intention/application
b. Detailed curricular vitaé and certified supporting documents;
c. Proposed Vision, Mission and Thrust for the College;
d. Clearances from the Police, NBI, Ombudsman, Sandiganbayan and Civil Service Commission;
e. Full disclosure of all administrative, criminal and/or civil cases filed;
f. Result of Neuro-Psychiatric Examination to be accomplished by any government physician on an accredited health institution;
g. Health certificate from any government physician.

Interested applicants are requested to submit the requirements not later than June 23, 2005 to:

DR. CRISTINA DAMASCO PADOLINA
Commissioner, CHED and
Chairperson, Sorsogon State College Governing Board
5/F DAP Bldg., San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. (02) 638-4870

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Office of the Secretariat for the Bids & Awards Committees in the Central Office
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 loc. 1829-1830 www.philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735 e-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS REMITTANCE FORMS (ME-5) FOR THE EMPLOYED SECTOR
No. 2005 – 007 g

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) wishes to invite duly licensed companies or business firms to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Procurement of Contribution Remittance Forms for the Employed Sector (ME-5) with the following specifications:

ME-5 Remittance Forms for the Employed Sector

QUANTITY	71,600 pads (14,320,000 sheets, 50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)
SIZE	Width 7.75 inches x Length 5 inches
MATERIAL	Imported Colored Carbon-less Paper Impression must be clear up to the last ply White Carbon-less Paper Yellow Carbon-less Paper Green Carbon-less Paper Pink Carbon-less Paper Wrapping Paper Cover / Chip Board
PROCESS	Offset printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies
SERIAL NUMBERS	9 Digits – All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 71,600 pads (209657501 – 213237500)
PACKAGING	50 pads per corrugated box Serial Numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box.

The approved budget for the contract for the Procurement of Contribution Remittance Forms for the Employed Sector (ME-5) is **PhP5,730,000.00** coming from **C.O.B. 2005.**

Bid documents can be obtained from May 16 – 26, 2005, 8:00a.m. to 6:00p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office, (Room 1804) 18th floor, PHILHEALTH, Citystate Centre, # 709 Shaw Blvd., Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP4,000.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on May 30, 2005 at 1:30p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office.

Deadline of submission of bids will be on **June 13, 2005 at 12:00 noon** at the office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of Bids will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same date and venue. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). **Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.**

(Sgd.) OCTAVINO Q. ESGUERRA
Senior Vice President and Chief Actuary
BAC Chairperson for Goods and Services

(PDI--May 11 & 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Center for Health Development – Ilocos
MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER
"PHIC Accredited Health Care Provider"
Batac, Ilocos Norte
Trunk line 077-792-3144; Fax line 077-792-3133
E-mail address: mmmh_doh@yahoo.com

INVITATION TO ELIGIBILITY SCREENING & TO BID

The Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital & Medical Center, Batac, Ilocos Norte, thru the Bids & Awards Committee is inviting bids to all interested suppliers, manufacturers and/or exclusive distributors to bid for the supply and delivery of the following:

Hospital Medical Equipment
Drugs & Medicines Requirements
Medical/Surgical Supplies, Laboratory & Dental Supplies

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

1 Advertisement	May 11-24, 2005
2. Issuance of Bid Documents/ Eligibility Checklist	June 15-24, 2005
3. Pre-bid conference	June 28, 2005 10:00 AM sharp MMMH & MC Training Center
4. Eligibility check/Submission & Opening of sealed bids for – Drugs & Medicines	July 11, 2005, 9:30 AM sharp (same venue)
Medical/Surgical Supplies, Laboratory, X'ray and Dental Supplies	July 12, 2005 9:30 AM sharp
Medical Equipment	July 13, 2005, 9:30 AM sharp

The complete set of bid documents may be purchased by the interested eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (Php1,000.00) only. Bid documents may be secured at the Property & Supply Section.

The Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital & Medical Center reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without offering any reason or waive any formality therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposals as evaluated by the Bids & Awards Committee, is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) MONA LIZA PASTRANA, M.D.
BAC Chairman

(PDI May 11 & 18, 2005)

THE
HERITAGE PARK
FORT-BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2005

RATE
P245 per column centimeter
(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

Our Dearly Beloved

GERARDO JOSE S. LOPEZ

September 30, 1964 - May 15, 2005

Peacefully joined our Lord after a brave battle with cancer.

His loving wife **Mary Geraldine**; sons **Joaquin** and **Sebastian**; parents **Drs. Jose** and **Milagros Santos Lopez**; parents-in-law: **Wilfrido** and **Teresita Villarama**; brother and sister-in-law: **Juan** and **Maria Victoria**; sister and brother-in-law: **Melinda** and **Roberto Garcia**; sister: **Cristina**; brother: **Antonio Deogracias**; in-laws: **Rafael** and **Bonita Rufino**; **Christopher** and **Rinna Gustilo**; **Celeste** and **Clarie Estrella**; nephews: **Anton** and **Noah**; nieces; **Carmela** and **Gianna**; and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City. The family will receive well-wishers between 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. on May 17, Tuesday and from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on May 18, Wednesday.

On May 19, Thursday, there will be a mass at 9 a.m. at Mt. Carmel Church. Remains will be transferred to The Heritage Park Chapel after Mass. Necrological services will be at 3 p.m. at The Heritage Park Chapel.

Interment will follow immediately.

"One thing I ask of the Lord this I seek;
To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life."
Psalm 27

MARIA TESORO ANLAP SISON

November 1, 1915 - May 15, 2005
UP College of Pharmacy Class 1936

Parents: Teopista Anlap (†) & David Fermin Sison (†)
Brothers, Sisters & In-laws:
Dr. Demosthenes (†) & Dr. Amparo V. Del Rosario (†), Dr. Rosario (†) & Cesar Diamante (†), Luz (†) & Jesus Ledesma (†), Lena (†) & Capt. Piatros Y. Medel (†), David, Jr. (†), Engr. Romulus (†) & Estrella Pilar (†), Xerces (†), Eva Lila (Lily) & Melito C. Salazar.

Nephews, nieces & grandnieces here & abroad request relatives & friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

'Her body will lie in state at the Holy Trinity Chapel, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City at 1:00 p.m. on May 18, 2005.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Saturday, May 21, 2005 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

I have fought a good figh, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.
-2 Timothy 4:7

CRISANTO J. RAMOS, SR.

April 22, 1932 – May 16, 2005
His wife **Tess**; children **Tommy & Edith**, **Jun**, **Jay & Jean**, **Marc**, and **Seth**; and sister **Gloria** request prayers fort his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at the family home, 76 San Pascual, Obando, Bulacan.

Interment to be announced later.

JOSE MIGUEL "Jingjong" VALDERROSA

Born March 14, 1922
Peacefully joined our Creator
on May 14, 2005

Widow of **Paz Esquivel Valderrosa**, his children, **Nicel & Baby**, **Bambi** (†) and **Joey Camins**, **Jomari & Rose**, **Oskie**, **Myra** and **Rashdi Abubakar**, **Jetjet & Katsuhiro Kotaki**, his grandchildren- **Aljo**, **Jika**, **Noler**, **Danika**, **Chicco**, **Dino**, **Nikko**, **Japjap**, **Mykka**, **Kiamee**, **Daichi**, **Kaichi**, **Saichi**, **Marika**, **Erika**, and great grandson **Luis Dominique** request the readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at Loyola Memorial Guadalupe Chapel C. Cremation will be on Saturday, May 21 at 7:30 a.m. at Loyola Memorial Guadalupe.

Our Dearly Beloved

GERARDO JOSE S. LOPEZ

September 30, 1964 to May 15, 2005

Peacefully joined our Lord after a brave battle with cancer.

His loving wife **Mary Geraldine**; sons **Joaquin** and **Sebastian**; parents **Drs. Jose** and **Milagros Lopez**; parents-in-law: **Wilfrido** and **Teresita Villarama**; brother and sister-in-law: **Juan** and **Maria Victoria**; sister and brother-in-law: **Melinda** and **Roberto Garcia**; sister: **Cristina**; brother: **Antonio Deogracias**; in-laws: **Rafael** and **Bonita Rufino**; **Christopher** and **Rinna Gustillo**; **Celeste** and **Clarie Estrella**; nephews: **Anton** and **Noah**; nieces: **Carmela** and **Gianna**; and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City. The family will receive well-wisher between 1pm to 10pm on May 17, Tuesday and from 9am to 10pm on May 18, Wednesday.

On May 19, Thursday, there will be a Mass at 9 am at Mt. Carmel Church. Necrological services will be at 3 pm at The Heritage Park Chapel. Interment will follow immediately.

Message of Thanks

We, Armand Jr., Robert, Mandie, Irwin, Nerissa, Ronald and Arlisse, together with our spouses and children, and the rest of the bereaved family of our Mommy

Rosa Montoya-Montano

(May 2, 1933 – May 11, 2005)

wish to express our deepest and sincerest appreciation to all of you who in various ways have condoled and comforted us during Mommy's wake and until we finally laid her to eternal rest last May 15, 2005.

You have meaningfully lightened our burden and eased our grief. We will cherish all these for the rest of our lives.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
Always caring... INQUIRER OBITUARIES
DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate; ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

OBITUARIES

SOLEDAD PALAPO SIASON

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on May 13, 2005 at the age of 72.

Her bereaved children **Renato**, **Rey**, **Juanito**, **Jose** and **Rizalino**; other relatives and friends request to join them in praying for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on May 19, 2005 at the Garden of Memories, Pateros at 8:00 a.m. Mass will be on May 18, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

Atty. JOSE G. NARCELLES

Former Quezon City Councilor

...passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on May 15, 2005 at the age of 89.

His bereaved wife **Prudencia Sanchez Narcelles**; children **Adonis**, **Jose Jr.**, **Cassanova**, **Magnifico**, **Valentino**, **Josephine**, other relatives and friends request the renders to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the Funeraria Paz Chapel II, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will take place on Friday, May 20, 2005 after the 7:00 a.m. Mass at the same place.

Death Notice

CRESENCIO LUCIDOS GALISANAO

Died in the Grace of our Lord
On May 16, 2005 at the age of 79.

His bereaved wife **Bienvenida**, sons & daughters, in-laws, relatives and friends request prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at his residence in Alcantara, Romblon.

Interment will be on Monday, May 23, 2005.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord." — 2 Corinthians 5:8

Our Dearly Beloved

GERARDO SANTOS LOPEZ

September 30, 1964 – May 15, 2005

Peacefully joined our Lord
after a brave battle against cancer.

We, **Willie** and **Tessie Villarama**, parents-in-law of our beloved Jerry wish to announce his demise. An ideal and unselfish son-in-law, he will be missed by us; his wife, **Mary Geraldine Estrella**; children, **Joaquin** and **Sebastian**; parents **Drs. Jose** and **Milagros**; brothers and sisters, **Juan** and **Victoria Rondaris**, **Melinda** and **Roberto Garcia**, **Cristina**, **Antonio**, **Lola Ceding Batista**, **Lola Pilar Buyson Villarama**; in-laws; **Chris** and **Rinna Gustilo**; **Pay** and **Bunny Rufino**; **Joei**, **Mariel** and **RM Villarama** and other relatives and friends. We request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mount Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City. Necrological services will be offered on Thursday, May 19, at the Heritage Park Chapel at 3:00 p.m. Interment will immediately follow.

CLASSIFIEDS

PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY

7th FLOOR LEGASPI TOWERS 220, PASEO DE ROXAS
CITY OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA
TELEPHONE NUMBERS 817-47-11 • 817-47-12 • 817-47-13
817-5017 • 817-5018 • 817-5014 • 813-1441/46
FAX (632) 815-2662 • 815-2600 • 817-3127
ZIP CODE 1226

INVITATION TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)** is inviting interested parties to participate in the public bidding negotiated phase for the sale or lease of eleven (11) lots on a serviced land basis, located at the Central Business Park 1 A. Bay City (formerly known as Boulevard 2000), Pasay City, for mixed use or commercial development purposes.

1. Properties for sale or lease:

BLK	LOT		AREA (sq.m.)	MODE
A1	1	corner	3,843	SALE
A2	1	corner	3,462	SALE
A2	2	interior	2,568	SALE
A2	3	interior	2,611	SALE
A2	4	interior	2,573	SALE
A2	5	corner	3,321	SALE
A3	1	corner	2,500	SALE
A3	2	interior	2,222	SALE
B4		portion	5,825	SALE OR LEASE
B7		portion	4,648	SALE OR LEASE
B5		portion	18,357	SALE OR LEASE

2. Qualified bidders:
   - Sale : Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any government owned or controlled corporations and any government financial institution or any public corporation, which have complied with the requirements established by PRA for this bidding.
   - Lease : Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 60% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check starting May 11 until May 24, 2005 from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM (Monday to Thursday) at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, MM.
4. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PRA Real Estates Bids and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on 25 May 2005 on or before 12:00 NN. Public opening of bids shall follow at 1:30 PM of the same day.
5. In the event that the public bidding becomes a failure, the PRA reserves the right to accept proposals for the subject properties.
6. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone numbers 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7103 to 7104 (direct lines).

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI–May 10 & 18, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

CEBU CITY

Tel. No. 256-1690

Telefax No. 254-2935

NOTCE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 2601 and 2607 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended as well as CMO No. 5-2003, there will be a Public Auction Sale to be conducted at the Port of Cebu on May 30, 2005 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning of the hereunder articles. Said goods shall be available for public viewing on May 27, 2005. For further inquiry, please contact telephone numbers 255-5188 or 254-9752.

In the event of a failed bidding for want of bidders or lack of an acceptable bid, there shall be a 2nd bidding on the next business day.

	Motor Vehicles	Floor Price
1.	**Used Nissan Terrano** *Gray Color, RHD / Engine No. TD27 / Chassis No. WBYD21-079-620*	P750,000.00
2.	**Used Nissan Terrano** *Blue Color, RHD / Engine No. TD27 / Chassis No. WBYD21-080070*	P750,000.00
3.	**Used Nissan Terrano** *Black Color, RHD / Engine No. TD27 / Chassis No. WBYD21-037963*	P750,000.00
4.	**Used Nissan Terrano** *Red Color, RHD / Engine No. TD27 / Chassis No. WBYD21-073409*	P750,000.00
5.	**Used Nissan Terrano** *Black Color, RHD / Engine No. TD27 / Chassis No. WBYD21-037747*	P750,000.00
6.	**Used Toyota Surf** *Gray Color, RHD / Engine No. 2L-TE / Chassis No. S1962*	P750,000.00
7.	**Used Toyota Surf** *Blue Color, RHD / Engine No. 2L-T / Chassis No. S1530*	P750,000.00
8.	**Used Toyota Surf** *Blue Color, RHD / Engine No. 2L-TE*	P750,000.00
9.	**Used Mitsubishi Delica** *Black Color, RHD / Engine No. 4M40 / Chassis No. PD8W-0015410*	P750,000.00
10.	**Used Mitsubishi Delica** *White Color / Engine No. 4D56 / Chassis No. P35W-0400527*	P750,000.00

Requirements for participating bidders:

a) P2,000.00 registration fee; and
b) Cash bond deposit of P20,000.00 either in cash or manager's check refundable to the losing bidders after closing of the auction sale; and

Registration fee and cash bond deposits are payable One (1) day before the date of the actual bidding.

Port of Cebu, Philippines, 16 May 2005.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. LOURDES V. MANGAOANG**
District Collector

(PDI - May 18, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

SSS EMPLOYEES' RICE REQUIREMENT FOR THE 3RD QUARTER OF CY2005

The **SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM** is inviting bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and door-to-door delivery of approximately 7,700 sacks of Freshly Milled Premium Grade Commercial Rice for SSS employees for the third quarter of Year 2005 with the following specifications:

- Degree of Milling : Well Milled Rice (WMR)
- Moisture Content : 14 % (maximum)
- Grade Specifications : Headrice – 90% to 95% (minimum)
  Broken – 10% to 5% (maximum)
- Packaging : 50 kilos in light yellow woven polyprophylene
- Labeling : with front and back markings
- Delivery Terms : Thirty (30) calendar days upon receipt of the Purchase Order (P.O.)

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P1,200.00 per sack per employee
Source of Fund : Operating Expense – Rice Grant

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Particulars	Date	Venue
Issuance of eligibility requirements	May 11 to 25, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Deadline of submission of eligibility requirements	May 31, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Issuance of Bidding Documents to Eligible Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00	June 02, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Pre-Bid Conference	June 03, 2005 2:00 p.m.	President's Board Room, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Submission & Opening of Bids shall be announced and confirmed through a Bid Bulletin		

For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 or 920-6401 local 5490/5491.

This bidding shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act"

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes no obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd) **THE CHAIRMAN**
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - May 18, 2005)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as Category B/AC Medium Sub-Category A General Engineering or General Building Contractor to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

STRUCTURAL AND MECHANICAL/PIPING WORKS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE UPPER MAHIAO STEAM WASHING SYSTEM AND THE CONCRETE SILENCERS AT MAHANAGDONG "A" AND "B" SEPARATOR STATION (LGPF)
(EDC 05-006)

The Approved Budget is P4,941,898.12 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 180 calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o H.A. Nicolasora) starting **May 18, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Two Hundred (P200.00).

Application for Eligibility and Letter of Intent must be submitted to the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group not later than 2:00 P.M. of **June 7, 2005**.

Bid documents will be available for issuance to eligible bidders starting **June 21, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos. Five Hundred (P500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on July 8, 2005, 10:00 A.M. at the Admin Complex, Leyte Geothermal Production Field (LGPF). Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, not later than **2:00 p.m. on July 21, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–May 18, 2005)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

DUTY FREE PHILIPPINES, a division of the Philippine Tourism Authority invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the design and production of:

DFP – 2006 COMPANY UNIFORM

The prospective bidder should have at least five (5) years experience in design and production of corporate uniforms.

The Approved Budget of the Contract is P4,067,220.00 chargeable against DFP Corporate Fund. The contract duration is 90 working days.

Interested bidders may submit personally their Letter of Intent and will be issued application for eligibility upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (P100.00) from May 26,27 & 31, 2005, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Purchasing Department, Duty Free Philippines, EHA Building, Ninoy Aquino Avenue, Paranaque City.

Deadline of submission of the application for eligibility shall be on June 09 & 10, 2005 from 9:00 am to 5.00 pm. All applicants shall be notified on the results of the eligibility check.

Bid documents shall be given only to those who have been found eligible on July 08, 2005, upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00).

Unless otherwise indicated in the Instruction to Bidders or other bidding and contract documents, all particulars relative to the procurement and contract implementation shall be governed by R.A. 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations.

Duty Free Philippines reserves the right to confiscate the bid bond should the winning bidder refuse to accept their award and the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, waive any defect contained therein and accept an offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **MA. LOURDES D. VELARDE**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – May 18 & 25, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Malaybalay City

Provincial Government of Bukidnon

759-05-002
Drugs & Medicines
760-05-002
Medical, Lab Supplies & Reagents
PGSO Capitol Compd., Malaybalay City

Standard Form Number SF-GOOD-05
Revised on July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BUKIDNON** through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder projects

NAME OF THE PROJECT : I Drugs and Medicines
II Medical Laboratory Supplies & Reagents
LOCATION : Provincial General Services Office Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City
BRIEF DESCRIPTION : For six months consumption of seven (7) Provincial Hospitals and Twenty-two (22) Provincial Health Stations
Approved Budget for the Contract : Project I – P23 037 885 08
Project II – P11 313 494 55
DELIVERY PERIOD : 15 working days upon receipt of purchase order
PLACE OF DELIVERY : Provincial General Services Office Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows

	ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1	Issuance of Bid Documents	May 11-19 2005
2	Application for Eligibility	May 19 2005 not later than 9 00 A.M
3	Pre-bid Conference	May 24 2005
4	Opening of Bids	June 7 2005 not later than 9 00 A.M.
5	Bid Evaluation	June 14, 2005
6	Post-qualification	June 21 2005
7.	Notice of Award	June 28 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00/Project to the Provincial Treasurer

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the BAC office Capitol Compound Malaybalay City. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security equal to 1% for Cash, Certified check, Cashier's check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit, 1.5% for Bank guarantee, 2.5% for Surety bond of the Approved Budget for the Contract as advertised. Late Bids shall not be accepted

The Province of Bukidnon reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

Tel No. 088-221-2357 • Fax No. 088-813-2522

Approved by

(Sgd.) **JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES**
Prov'l Admin/BAC Chairman

(PDI–May 11 & 18, 2005)

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- Atty. Albert B. Arcilla
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- Mia D. Floirendo
& Tricia G. Tarriela
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*See catalogue for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No 2373, Series of 2005.

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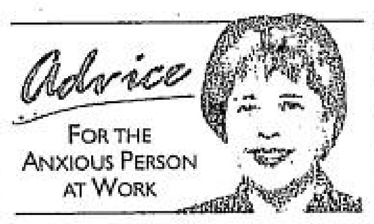
Subsection Editor **Regina Galang Reyes**

Entrepreneur hungers for good governance

By Tita Datu Puangco



Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I AM an entrepreneur who struggled for the past years to keep my business intact. However, with the weak economy, things have gone from bad to worse. I am getting very discouraged. Recently, my wife and I went to Singapore for a brief vacation to reduce our stress levels and think about how to turn around our business. Singapore is such a showcase of what happens when things are done right.

We talked about how different things are in our country. Many are jobless. The poor have grown in number. The middle class is struggling. Our main exports of semiconductors and garments are down. Many plants have closed. The best of our people can only find work in call centers. We are a creative and talented people and yet, we are at a low-rung economy-wise. And the paradox is our President is an economist.

We agreed that what spells the big difference between Singapore and the Philippines is good governance. After our discussion, we both felt very depressed with our country and our leaders—they are the main reason for our malaise. We don't like ourselves when we feel and think negatively this way. We want to continue and contribute to the good of our country. What can we really do? Please advise.

Discouraged Entrepreneur

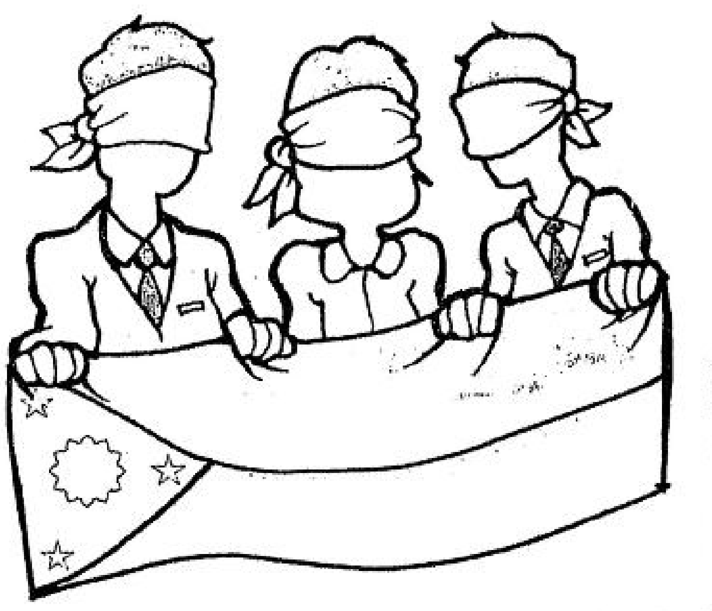


ILLUSTRATION BY LA MISTADES

Thank you for your letter. I am sure it echoes the sentiments of a number of businessmen. Indeed, taking a break from the pressures of business, so that one can think clearly, is a must. I am sorry to hear that your business has gone from bad to worse.

I suggest that you focus on the areas that you can control or influence rather than get depressed. Try to pursue the best actions to keep your business afloat. Now, if your products or services are obsolete, your solution may be to cut your losses and close the business. Isn't it true that often we blame the economy when the other side of running the business is to adopt the proper strategy and respond appropriately to the external environment?

Role of elite

Regarding Singapore, I came across a speech of Minister Lee that impressed me. His talk focused on the role of the elite in society. His statements in that speech seemed to indict the elite in our country. He started by defining the "elite" as the core group of people who occupy key positions of power and influence and set the direction for the whole society and country.

Studying the elite in Britain, China and the US, he drew some lessons and conclusions. First, every society will have an elite. Even if it aims to become a classless society where all men are equal, some men will turn out to be more equal than others. Second, there is a tendency for the elite in any society to entrench themselves over time, and to become more closed and exclusive. Third, the educational system is crucial in shaping the type of elite a society has.

Then he proposed a Singapore elite that benefits society. He was convinced that the future depended on renewing and enlarging the elite group and ensuring their being responsible for the whole society.

He recommended an elite that is "open and inclusive," able to bring in a consistent flow of younger talent, contributing new ideas and vigor in solving new problems. The elite should demonstrate that if one works hard and do well, one can make it to the top, a reflection of meritocracy.

Quality education

He also cited the need for a high quality education system, which maintains high standards in all schools, and not just a few outstanding institutions. He urged a special effort to spot and

ENTREPRENEUR/ B2-4

BayanTel recognizes top performers

By Candy G. Villanueva
Contributor

SOME came dashing in cowboy hats, others in ordinary baseball caps. One swaggered in with a trophy sitting on his head, and before the end of the night, won another trophy for best hat. An assortment of hats was modeled that night at Bayan Telecommunications' Gawad Galing awards. Big, small, conservative, wacky—whatever it was that crowned the heads of BayanTel's employees—every hat was taken off as a tribute to the top performers that made BayanTel "better than ever." It was also a tribute to the 12-year-old company that brought them growth, self-reliance and success.

In an effort to challenge and inspire its people to help bring the company to the forefront of the telecommunications industry, BayanTel put together the Gawad Galing awards. Created last year, Gawad Galing aims to honor its top individual and team performers who have surpassed expectations and achieved business breakthroughs that contributed to BayanTel's business objectives. At the 2005 Gawad Galing awards, board members and personnel alike took their hats off to honor the company's role models and outstanding contributors.

Better than ever

In the previous years, it had been a tough journey for BayanTel as it rode out the storm of an increasingly competitive and challenging telecommunications industry. But the hardworking and driven employees of BayanTel held on to their hats as they weathered the storm and brought the company to where it is today. True to their slogan, BayanTel is confident that they came out better than ever. According to audited statements, BayanTel achieved unprecedented gains in 2004 by growing its revenues to P5.46 billion, representing an 8 percent growth from the 2003 level. This resulted in a 58-percent increase in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) year on year from P1.43 billion in 2003 to P2.23 billion in 2004.

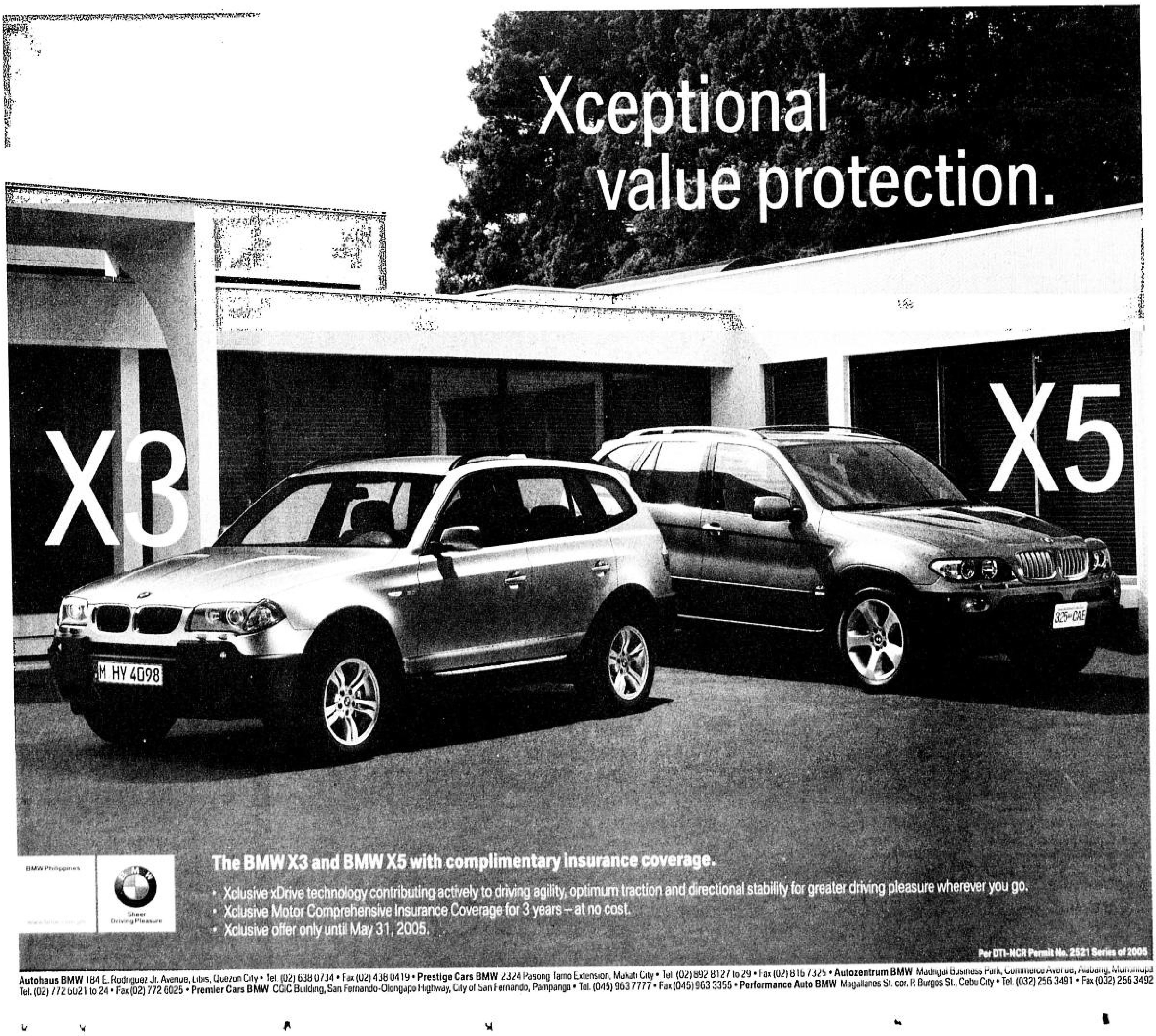
To celebrate the unprecedented success, Gawad Galing was again held this year as it acknowledged the efforts and behavior of the people who have made it all possible. "The success and growth of an organization rest on how our employees execute our battle plans. If they are rewarded and recognized properly, chances are they will repeat and exceed outstanding performance behaviors and results. And this strengthens the likelihood that the whole team will continue to work excellently over the long term," explains Philip Ruiz, III, BayanTel vice president for HR development.

Top seller

The awards categories were Top Seller of the Year, Best Performing Market, Breakthrough Teams in Support and Operations and Best Support Group among others.

Randy Birondo of the South Mindanao team under the Provincial Markets Division was

BAYANTEL/ B2-4



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BayanTel Gawad Galing 2005:

Gearing up for the next level of performance and growth

The Gawad Galing event underscored the culture of success and excellence that has brought so much gains during the past year for BayanTel.

The winning teams and individuals that we honored stood out as among the best in BayanTel. They were proof that BayanTel truly have impressive people and teams in its midst that not only were capable to deliver the results, but were willing to share their leadership and skills to help others in the organization to become better.

These were the people who raised the level of excellence in the organization; who continuously made the difficult seem easy; and, day in and day out, made the impossible doable.

Behind the figures that we saw on the charts or on our spreadsheets, there were real stories that real people made happen. For every target that they have reached and exceeded, for every quota that they filled, for every successful project that they implemented, for every customer that they satisfied, they gave a little bit of themselves through hard work, dedication, perseverance, and of course their own sweat and tears.

Knowing that, I can honestly say that each of our guys and teams who were honored deserve the awards and the accolades that they received in every possible way.

Congratulations to all Gawad Galing awardees!

Tunde Fafunwa
Chief Consultant

BayanTel is extremely proud to present and congratulate our individual and team winners for its very prestigious Gawad Galing Awards.

Our winners this year were exceptional in the sense that they included not only the top sales individuals and teams but also support groups, the unsung men and women who handled the backroom operations but nonetheless a critical component of our success.

Customer satisfaction being our key business goal required not only delivering the best performance to our subscribers and corporate customers but also required being at your best in service of those within the organization or the internal customers.

But Gawad Galing is not just a recognition program based on performance metrics alone. It is also an opportunity for the company to inject a sense of fun and excitement, with special prizes and trophies given away to the winners, and a themed party we held to award the winners.

BayanTel can play hard as it works hard. This year, our theme ***"Hats Off BayanTel!"*** was only fitting as we honor and doff our hats to the achievers in our organization and for the business gains we have achieved in the past year.

The enthusiastic response and participation of BayanTel employees across all levels in the organization was proof that we are making solid progress in creating a culture of performance with a sense of fun in the organization.

So our hats off to this year's Gawad Galing winners and we hope to see more achievers in all the years to come!

Philip T. Ruiz III
Vice-President
Human Resources & Organization Development

Now on its second year, BayanTel's Gawad Galing, the centerpiece employee rewards and recognition program launched last year, has set the tone for the kind of high performance culture that BayanTel seeks to institutionalize.

By rewarding and recognizing the top performers who exceeded expectations, the program shaped the kind of mindset and attitude that BayanTel sought to cultivate among its employees.

And in a market environment where organizational productivity is key for leadership, BayanTel is certainly headed towards the right direction.

BayanTel has focused itself on becoming a service provider that guarantees to deliver what the customers want...fast!

Last year, BayanTel posted stellar results compared to the previous year. According to audited statements, BayanTel achieved unprecedented gains in 2004 by growing its revenues to P5.46 billion, representing 8% growth from 2003 level. This resulted in a 58% increase in EBITDA year on year from P1.43 billion in 2003 to P2.23 billion in 2004.

The results are indicative of a company riding the crest of a turnaround, underpinned by a renewed mission to become a service provider that guarantees to deliver what the customers want...fast!

BayanTel chief consultant Tunde Fafunwa said: "The telecommunications industry is ripe with service providers who have taken the lead in technological innovation and marketing savvy."

"As an organization, BayanTel has rallied behind the realization that in order to sustain our growth, we need to focus our business to delivering what the customers really want, to do it fast, and to deliver it with service beyond reproach."

"This is how we want to represent ourselves in the market and to our customers, and the primary tool to make this all possible is through the commitment and dedication of our people."

Thus, beyond the financial and operational results, the real turnaround has taken shape in BayanTel where it matters most: within the organization and among its employees.

In the last few years, BayanTel has endeavored to build a high performance culture driven by the collective need to meet and surpass customer expectations. With a defined business goal under a dynamic management team and resilient workforce, BayanTel has now emerged from the shadows of its past into the bright lights of a competitive future.

With a renewed sense of mission, a renewed drive to develop new products and services based on new technologies, a better sense of adoption and execution, and a clear mindset towards satisfying customers based on guaranteed benefits, BayanTel is geared for the next level of growth and profitability.

The Gawad Galing program is a key part of the engine that drives BayanTel towards its business goals by encouraging a culture of performance and success within the organization.

Like last year, the Gawad Galing awardees for individual and team sales awards were not based on popularity votes but on performance metrics which were carefully evaluated and validated by a nominations committee and a board of judges.

This year, breakthrough teams and special recognition for individuals and teams in the support and operations divisions were also recognized, nominated on the basis of exceptional performance in support of the business objectives, decided by a panel composed of BayanTel's management committee. As Gawad Galing evolves, it attempts to recognize as many exceptional successes in the organization as possible.

Indeed, with a resilient workforce energized by the encouraging business results and the feeling of shared responsibilities and rewards, BayanTel is ready and raring to take on the challenges of the future.

We acknowledge the invaluable support of some of our partners:

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Randy Birondo

Top Seller of the Year

Individual Excellence

Provincial Markets

Randy was the top seller of the year who achieved 30% above his net revenue target and achieved an outstanding collection rate performance.
An unassuming fellow, Randy's performance as part of the sales team in the Mindanao Market was one of the key reasons why BayanTel achieved market growth in its provincial market operations.

Randy professed during the awarding ceremony his being "grateful to BayanTel management for recognizing (my) efforts." He also expressed his thanks to his superiors for their support.
With his humility and dedication to his craft, Randy is a safe bet to be among those who will gain BayanTel a firmer foothold in the provincial markets.

Joseph Ling

Individual Excellence

Metro Manila Retail

Joseph has the distinction of being the only individual Gawad Galing winner who has won the same category for two years running. With his sales savvy and quick thinking, it did not come as a surprise to his teammates in the Internet sales team.

Joseph admitted he has set his focus at the start of 2004 to repeat his performance and win another Gawad Galing award.

Thelma Nogoy

Individual Excellence

International and Carrier Markets

Thelma's perseverance and dedication to her job in the Wholesale Markets of the International and Carrier Markets merited her a Gawad Galing award. She delivered more than the target revenues expected from her, and she did it with her low key yet determined demeanor to achieve results.

Noriel Gonzales

Individual Excellence

Corporate and Business Markets

Noriel was a winner not only based on his sales performance by netting about 30% more than his target for 2004 but also by bringing in quality accounts and significantly growing his sales portfolio.

Noriel's success became more meaningful because his achievement did not come overnight, but through difficult, incremental month-on-month sales and collection improvement. However, hardwork did pay off - resulting in an impressive total year sales performance deserving of a Gawad Galing award. He showed that it is not how you start the game that matters most, but how you end it.

Benjamin Aquino

Special Recognition Awardee

LEC Operations, Network

Among the previously unsung heroes in BayanTel, Benjie finally got the recognition he deserved. He was instrumental in curbing theft of BayanTel cables and was heavily involved in relevant cost saving programs for the company.

Controllership Division

Best Performing Support Group

For the first time, Gawad Galing gave recognition to an outstanding support group and it was only fitting the award went to the Controllership Group.

The team, headed by Fred Prepuse, garnered high marks for meeting their service level agreements with internal customers and internal report generation crucial in making business decisions.

GAWAD GALING

International and Carrier Markets

Best Performing Market

The International and Carrier Markets has been the *"star"* business group in BayanTel for the past two years.

A Gawad Galing winner in the same category last year, the team now headed by Bong Molina continued to chart impressive growth for BayanTel in the overseas market, particularly targeting the Pinoys living abroad.

Wholesale Markets

Best Team for International and Carrier Markets

The Wholesale Market of the International and Carrier Markets groups garnered the Gawad Galing award for surpassing their targets by almost 30% and bringing in almost P1billion in revenues for the company.

Their target market being corporate in nature can explain the millions of revenue they can generate but its still not bad for a five-man team of committed and focused individuals.

PAPTELCO Team

Best Team for Provincial Markets

The PAPTELCO Team was instrumental in building business partnerships with the small telephone companies serving the rural areas, thus expanding BayanTel's services.

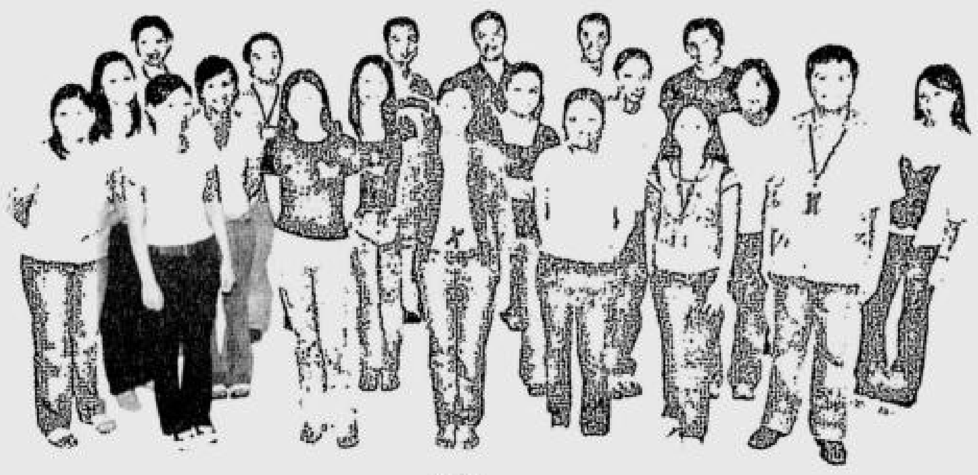
The cooperative approach to the market led to exceptional business results for the team, gaining for them a Gawad Galing award.

Metro Manila LEC Operations Area 4

(Cubao and Diliman)

Breakthrough Team in Support and Operations, 1st Place

The first place winner in the Breakthrough Team awards underscored BayanTel's thrust to be the provider that guarantees to deliver what customers want…fast!. The Metro Manila LEC Operations Area 4 team led by Benjamin Aquino was instrumental in delivering fast installation and response times for both fixed line and DSL in their area. And they did it with an efficient performance resulting in significant cost savings.



Customer Care Telemarketing Team

(International Retail Cards)

Breakthrough Team in Support and Operations, 2nd Place

The Breakthrough Team awards were given to teams that provided quantifiable and value-added support that resulted in incremental improvement, revenue growth, improved customer satisfaction or substantial cost savings for the company.

With this criteria, the Telemarketing Team of Customer Care for International Retail Cards with team leader Vic Caubalejo garnered merit for exceeding their revenue targets while improving their productivity.

Report and Admin Unit, Business Support Group, MM Retail Market

Special Recognition Awardee

The Report Unit of the Business Service Unit of the Residential Markets was endorsed by the team's overall head himself because of the team's timely and effective delivery of key business information to the sales team.

This allowed the residential market group to perform higher than the sales targets last year.

Tantra Team

Special Recognition Awardee

The Tantra Team gained a Special Recognition award for putting BayanTel in the massively multi-player online game (MMOG) map. This expanded BayanTel's value proposition as a provider of exciting content to its growing Internet subscribers.

This cross-functional team (Network and Product Development) was also the instrumental in developing BayanTel's own local Internet exchange, now considered one of the most extensive Internet exchange network in the Philippines.

GAWAD GALING

BAYANTEL

GUARANTEED 24 HOUR QUICK SERVICE

How can we make work more civil?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: No one answers e-mail, phone calls or letters anymore. What ever happened to basic manners and consideration at work?

Raised Right

Recently, I was going to dinner with career guru and author of "What Color Is Your Parachute?" Dick Bolles. (If you haven't read Parachute yet, run, don't walk, to your nearest bookstore.) Dick said, "One point." I looked at him with a quizzically and he explained that he'd created a game he plays when he drives. He gives himself one point for doing something nice for another driver. He said it's made driving more fun and he proudly said he'd just topped his previous week's score.

Civility is a lot like that. It's often necessary to create our own personal incentives to keep yourself on the right path. I've listed some examples below, but don't stop there. Develop your own strategies to make your little corner of the bureaucracy more civil. For more strategies, check out "Choosing Civility" by P.M. Forni (St. Martins, 2002).

Do you pay attention? Dr. Forni points out that without paying attention to someone else, no meaningful interaction is possible. I don't want to make anyone feel guilty, but how many times a day are you really engaged with people and how many times are you glancing at the clock, your PDA or looking for something or someone? We're all multitasking freaks these days, but it's important to give people your full attention and to push whatever you're working on aside for a few minutes.

Can you speak kindly of others? There are a lot of good people out there, but to listen to most of our conversations, you'd think differently. What I hear on airplanes, busses and on street corners has led me to believe that incompetence is an epidemic. I know this sounds corny, but we all should try to practice the message of one of my dad's favorite songs, "Accentuate the Positive."

Do you respect the opinions of others? Remember the last time someone dissed you or your opinions? That's precisely why it is so important for each of us to remember to honor the thoughts and feelings of others. I'm not saying that you should do whatever anyone suggests, but simply to give them a hearing and allow the possibility that you may be convinced by them.

Do you respect people's time and space requirements? Some people like a hug and others like to keep their distance. It's important to act when you're around each type. And when you know someone is under a deadline, can you hit the pause button?

Do you apologize earnestly? This is something that I feel very strongly about. We all need to learn how to apologize better. With everyone running around crazily, we tend to get in each others way more than ever. That's why apologies are an essential for surviving today's workplace.

Civility isn't a game, but if you turn it into one, like Dick Bolles, we'll all be richer because of it.

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: How would you describe your workplace?

—Downright rude, 12.2 percent

—Downright civil, 32.9 percent

—Depends on the person and day, 54.7 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

BayanTel recognizes top performers

From page B2-1

RANDY Birondo of Provincial Markets (center) received his perpetual trophy as Top Seller of the Year from (L to R) Mar Santos, vice president for provincial markets, BayanTel board member former Ambassador Cesar Bautista, chief consultant Tunde Fafunwa, and board member lawyer Jake Almeda Lopez.

named Gawad Galing Top Seller of the Year. He was awarded for having topped his target, the highest among all sales people at 30 percent above his net revenue target. Birondo's performance was instrumental in the market growth of BayanTel's provincial market operations.

Birondo was extremely grateful for the recognition of his efforts and dedication after only two years with the company. "Through hard work and dedication and the support of my superior and teammates, I was able to accumulate the product knowledge that made me successful in selling BayanTel services. It was difficult at first coming from a pharmaceutical background but it's good to know that my strong desire to succeed paid off."

Looking forward, the top seller plans to tap unexplored areas in the region not only to build his portfolio but also to share the services BayanTel can offer to a broader market.

Performing market

The Best Performing Market for the second year was given to the International and Carrier Markets Division. A Gawad Galing winner in the same category last year, the team, now headed by Marvic Molina, continued to show impressive growth for BayanTel in the overseas market, particularly targeting Filipinos abroad who benefit from phone cards. Molina credits the success to the team's adoption of BayanTel's corporate values of action, teamwork, ownership and meritocracy.

"Of course, our good relationships with wholesale carriers, both local and international, were instrumental in driving our business but credit also goes to our retail business. By developing channels to sell our phone cards in different countries abroad catering to overseas Filipino workers, revenues from our retail cards grew about 50 percent in 2004," shares Molina.

Support group

For the first time, Gawad Galing waved their hats in recognition to the Controllership Group as the Best Support Group. The team, headed by Fred Prepuse, was commended for its efficient handling of the accounting procedures and internal report generation crucial in making business decisions. "The most important factor in our success is our focus on meeting our service level agreements with our internal clients, particularly the business groups," explains the head.

The group is composed of different departments—accounting, revenue assurance, budget and reports, property accounting and insurance, carrier settlement and tax planning. According to Prepuse, each of these departments plays a critical role in BayanTel's delivery of service so the business groups can have accurate information to make the right business decisions. "Thus, it is important that we are prompt in observing timelines and deadlines to deliver the information required. Even if it means we have to exert extra effort like going to the office on weekends; we cannot compromise on the deadlines."

Special recognition

Other winners in the sales category for individual and groups were Noriel Gonzales for Individual Excellence in Corporate and Business Markets, Joseph Ling for Individual Excellence in Metro Manila Retail, Thelma Nogoy for Individual Excellence in International and Carrier Markets, PAPTELCO Team for Best Team for Provincial Markets and finally Wholesale Markets for Best Team for International and Carrier Markets

Special awards were also given to teams and individuals that provided quantifiable and value-added support that resulted in incremental improvement, revenue growth, improved customer satisfaction or substantial cost savings for the company. The awardees were Customer Care Telemarketing Team (International Retail Cards) Breakthrough Team in Support and Operations for Second Place and Metro Manila LEC Operations Area 4 (Cubao and Diliman) Breakthrough Team in Support and Operations for First Place. Benjamin Aquino bagged the Special Recognition Award, the Tantra Team earned the Special Recognition Award and the Report Unit, Business Service Unit received the Special Recognition Award.

Fun awards

Aside from the Oneida trophies and the priceless recognition, cash and vacation prizes were also given away to the winners. This year, the top group honors pocketed P150,000 cash, while individual winners were given all expense paid vacations with pocket money.

The employees who didn't get any awards didn't go home empty-handed either. The Gawad Galing themed party held at the company's premises in Roosevelt, Quezon City treated the BayanTel people to food, drinks and a whole night of dancing. "Gawad Galing is not your usual recognition program that is more formal. We also view it as an opportunity for the company to inject a sense of fun and excitement in what we do," Ruiz, in his green baseball cap, proudly shares. This year's theme was Hat's Off to BayanTel where BayanTel employees were encouraged to come in their best-looking hats. Even Chief Consultant Tunde Fafunwa graced the event in an engineer's hard hat. And although BayanTel chairman Oscar M. Lopez came bareheaded, he urged the audience to continue their winning ways.

"This is the second year we have organized the Gawad Galing Awards Night and each year, we have seen enthusiastic participation among BayanTel staff across all levels in the organization, proof that we are making solid progress in creating a culture of performance with a sense of fun in the organization," concludes Ruiz.

(E-mail the author at candyvillanueva@pldtdsl.net.*)*

Entrepreneur hungers for good governance

From page B2-1

develop talent from poorer families through scholarships and through special attention by teachers and mentors.

What I liked best was his advice "to guard against the tendency for social barriers to grow, which over time make the elite more closed and exclusive." He urged a "conscious effort to minimize the social distance between those at the top and the general population." He discouraged ostentation in lifestyles, dress or social norms, which will make others less affluent feel out of place. Addressing the politicians, he urged them "to set the tone, to dress down, do not wear expensive designer suits; have meals in hawker centres. Maintain an informal tone, in order to keep an egalitarian society."

Responsibility to the country

Second, the elite must have a sense of shared purpose, a responsibility to contribute to the country and make it better. A person should win standing and honor in society more by making a difference to the wider community rather than through personal success and material achievements. The elite have a moral obligation to give back to society.

He cited the importance of a sense of patriotism "people who love our country, love the land we grew up in, and take pride in what we have achieved together, are the heart and soul of the country. Such citizens will naturally also care for the people and the community, and want to achieve even more for the country."

His message can apply equally well to the elite in our country. You have to care and assume responsibility. Stop taking advantage of your power and influence to pursue personal gain rather than being responsible for the common good. What I understood is leadership has to define what are the right things to do, get the gift of trust from people and pursue accordingly the right actions. Leadership has to be first of all moral leadership. Hope his speech becomes food for thought for all of us. God bless.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax to* 892-2902.)

WHY THIS AD COULD SOON BE
A THING OF THE PAST

(and why anyone involved in marketing and sales should sit up and take notice before it's too late)

Why is it that people talk about a bigger global market, but your own market seems to be shrinking?

Why is it that the population is growing, but your sales are decreasing? Or that you're selling more than ever, but your profitability is getting lower?

And why is it that, even as more people get mobile phones and e-mail addresses, it's become even harder to reach your target market?

The challenges abound, but the solutions seem to be few and far between. For instance, how can you really increase your sales when your budget has been slashed? How can you build your brand when even multi-national corporations are complaining about the expense involved in developing their brands?

The solution?

Confused? Scared? Frustrated? You're not alone. Several other companies, here and abroad, have faced those challenges. And surprisingly, they are now willing to share with you what they did to overcome those challenges.

It wasn't easy to get the country's fastest growing bank to talk about what they did to grow. And it's not everyday that you can learn how a local company can compete successfully against global giants not just in the Philippines, but in other parts of Asia as well. But this year, on May 25 & 26, you can be part of a select group of people who can hear about, and learn from, these companies.

Learning from outside

But that's not enough for today's Filipino companies, who now have to learn to compete not just against each other, but against companies in Asia and the rest of the world. The Japanese, after all, had no qualms about learning from the Western countries in order to do better. The VP from the world's fifth largest agency network is flying in from Singapore. A co-author of Philip Kotler is flying in from Indonesia. The senior vice president of Adidas Salomon is flying in from Hong Kong.

The Road to Convergence

The only chance you will have this year

All these talented individuals are coming together at the 36th National Marketing Conference, at the invitation of the Philippine Marketing Association. You do not even have to be a member of the Philippine Marketing Association to take advantage of the low rate of P8,500 for the full 2-day conference. (Just imagine how much it would have cost you if you had to fly in all these high-powered individuals for your company, and pay for their consultation fees!)

The rate of P8,500 is only available to Filipino delegates, as foreign delegates have to pay US$300 to attend this conference, so do not let this opportunity go to waste. Call 849-69-36 to book a slot for the 36th National Marketing Conference today.

Philippine Marketing Association
36th National Marketing Conference
May 25 - 26, 2005
Westin Philippine Plaza

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

The case of the female car repair window shopper

By Tessa R. Salazar

Just like shopping for clothes, or makeup, or shoes, finding out the best repair shop for you isn't just about a matter of price

THEY say the world of cars and motoring is a man's world. That cliché is often reinforced by sob stories of female drivers being duped by some roadside car shops promising value-for-money work.

When we hear of one hapless lady driver harassed by the *casa* or her *talyer*, pressuring her to part with much of her hard-earned pay for a supposedly expensive part replaced or serviced by greasy men, we shake our heads and wonder, "Is chivalry dead among the car repair shops?"

This writer, intrigued by the seemingly rhetorical question, sought to find that out. And she used her own car, and her own month's pay, to test which among the auto repair shops she would visit for four days could actually have gentlemen genuinely interested in her car's well being, and would be honest enough to tell her the real problem with her car.

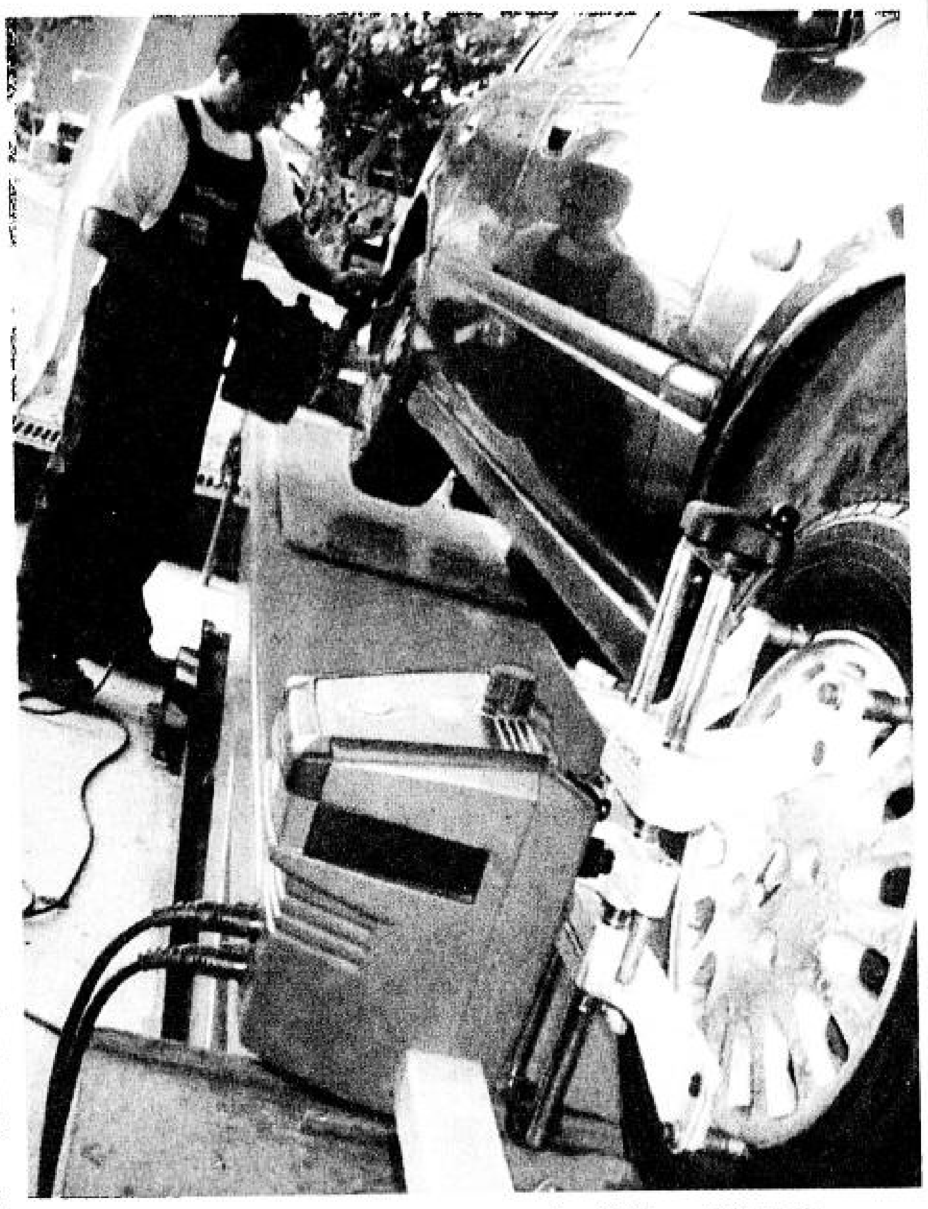
The car trouble had to be real, of course. And so, she waited for something to go wrong with her 8-year-old Honda Civic LXi before going about window-shopping.

It happened sooner than she thought. Her steering column began bleeding power steering fluid. After having the problem diagnosed by a trusted mechanic and friend (who, by the way, was a well-known personality among motoring journalists), she promptly had two sets of tie rod ends, two sets of rack ends, two pieces of steering boots and one repair kit set replaced. All for the humble cost of just about P8,000 (original parts would cost P7,200 for two sets of tie rod ends and two sets of rack ends alone). But original parts, as mechanic friends say, are still of higher quality but at a higher price.

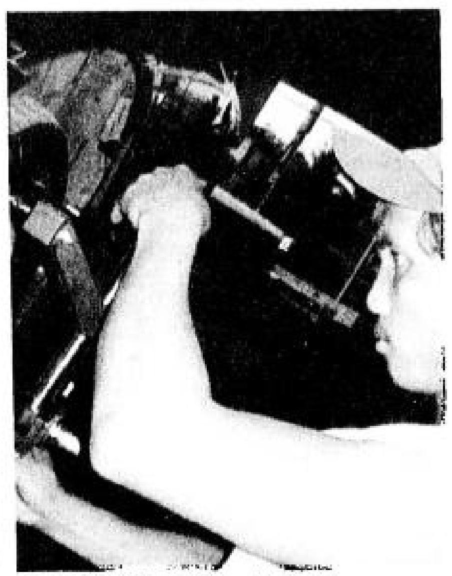
First essential step

The mechanic-friend, however, told her matter-of-factly that his shop lacked a tire aligner, so the car would be running funny. Fair enough, the lady said. She would bring the car to shops with such equipment.

And that is the first essential step in getting the best value repair. Before the car goes "under the knife," compare knives. Most car repair shops offer free diagnoses, anyway. So, why not use them?



MINERVA'S computerized aligner is programmed on Windows 2000. Each alignment maneuver is seen on the computer screen in 10 minutes.



A 'TALYER' stand-beside-your-car-while-you-wait also has computerized four-wheel alignment setup.

This author window shopped to determine her range of options and the disparity of prices they would charge. Mechanic friends say canvassing auto repair shops, comparing and contrasting equipment and price would still be the smartest way to go.

She visited nine repair shops for three days; quite exhausting, but well worth the effort.

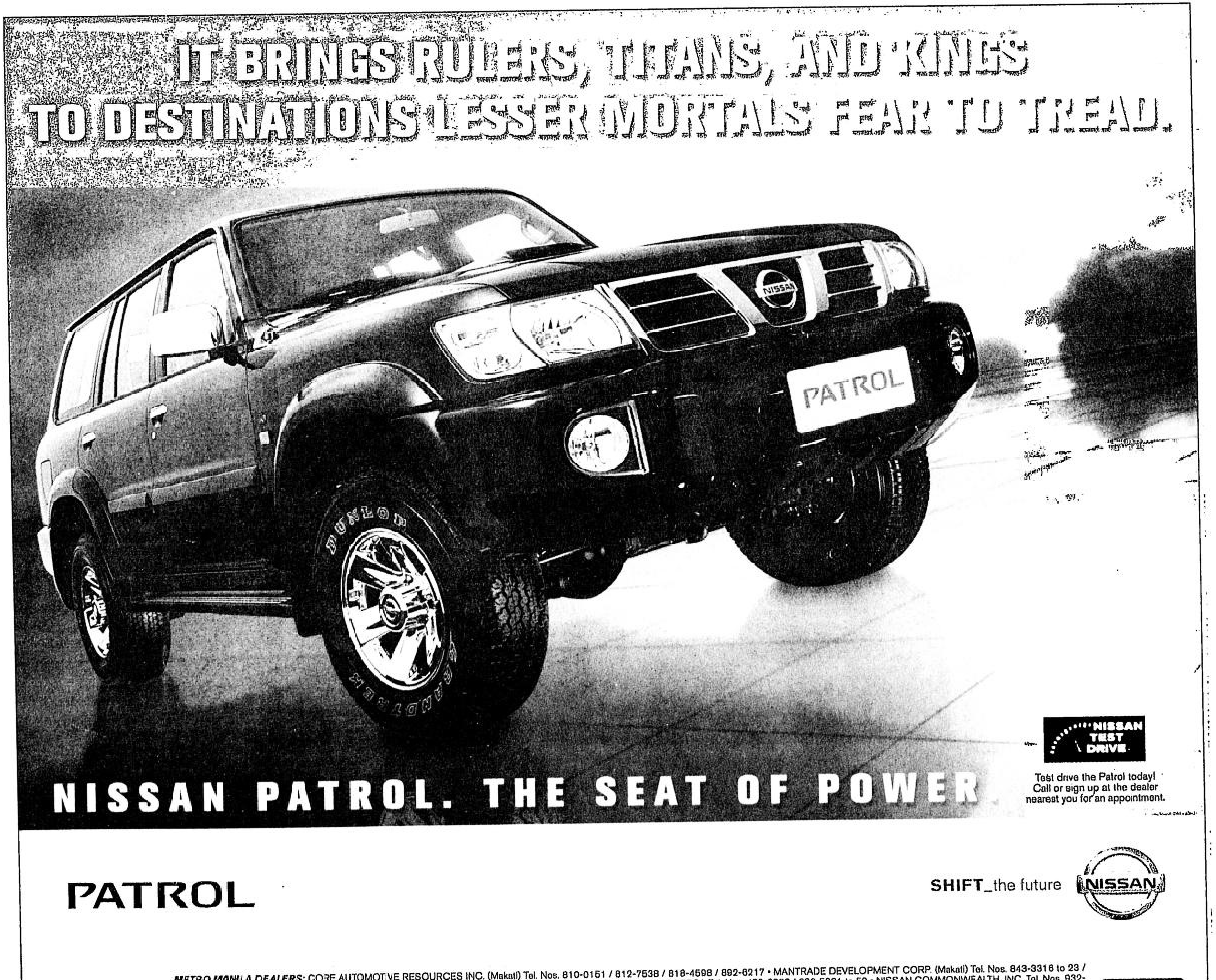
CPM Muffler was first on the list. Last Friday, she visited CPM Muffler on Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) in Makati City. The customers' waiting area was air-conditioned, thankfully. After inspecting the problem (for free), the mechanic estimated the cost of alignment for the front at P300, with a warranty period of 15 days.

Next up were three Rapide Auto Service Experts branches (Alabang in Muntinlupa, Chino Roces and Petron Alabang). They offered free checkups, an air-conditioned waiting room and a computerized Super Tracker Laser Aligning System, which makes use of laser light to determine if tires are aligned.

For toe-in, toe-out tire alignments, Rapide charged P1,200, regardless of the number of tires to be aligned.

She asked Bong Francisco of Rapide Motor Town Center in Alabang, "Is the Su-

THE CASE/ C3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3 YEAR WARRANTY 100K KM

Ssangyong's luxury CRDi SUV

IN A MANNER of speaking, the Rexton RX270 Xdi is SsangYong Motor Co.'s declaration of independence from Mercedes-Benz (MB), its mentor in automotive technology since the early 1990s. For with this luxury SUV, Ssangyong, South Korea's fourth largest car manufacturer, came up with its own common rail direct injection (CRDi) diesel engine that may be even better than the German carmaker's 5-cylinder, 270 CDI common rail diesel powerplant. No wonder the Rexton RX270 Xdi was voted Car of the Year 2004 and also SUV of the Year in Malaysia.

The Rexton's 5-cylinder, DOHC, CRDi engine produces 168 max horsepower and 340 Nm max torque. Its 32-bit ECU (engine control unit) is faster than the MB 270 CDI's 16-bit ECU. The fuel injection system, sourced from Delphi, squirts diesel into the combustion chambers at an incredible pressure of 1,600 bar compared to the MB 270 CDIs 1,400 bar.

200 prototypes

SsangYong reportedly developed the 270 Xdi engine over a period of four years at a cost of about US$142 million and built 200 prototype engines for tests over thousands of hours and millions of kilometers, using rigorous MB testing and validation procedures. The engine, according to this source, is tested and rated for a service life of one million kilometers, although dealers' warranty is only for 100,000 km or three years, which ever comes first.

Compared to SsangYong's old 2.9-liter turbodiesel engine that was an obsolete MB design, the 270Xdi delivers 43 percent more power, 33 percent more torque and much less noise, vibration and emissions. Its top speed is 178 km per hour. If you don't drive it that fast too often, you will be rewarded with fuel economy averaging 10.4 km per liter overall in city and highway driving combined.

The Rexton's standard safety features consist of a driver's side airbag, four-wheel disc brakes with ABS, remote keyless entry with alarm, central door lock with speed sensor, front fog lamps, and door impact beams. Occupants are protected by its steel safety shell attached to a highly rigid ladder frame that has been reinforced with cross members.

T-Tronic

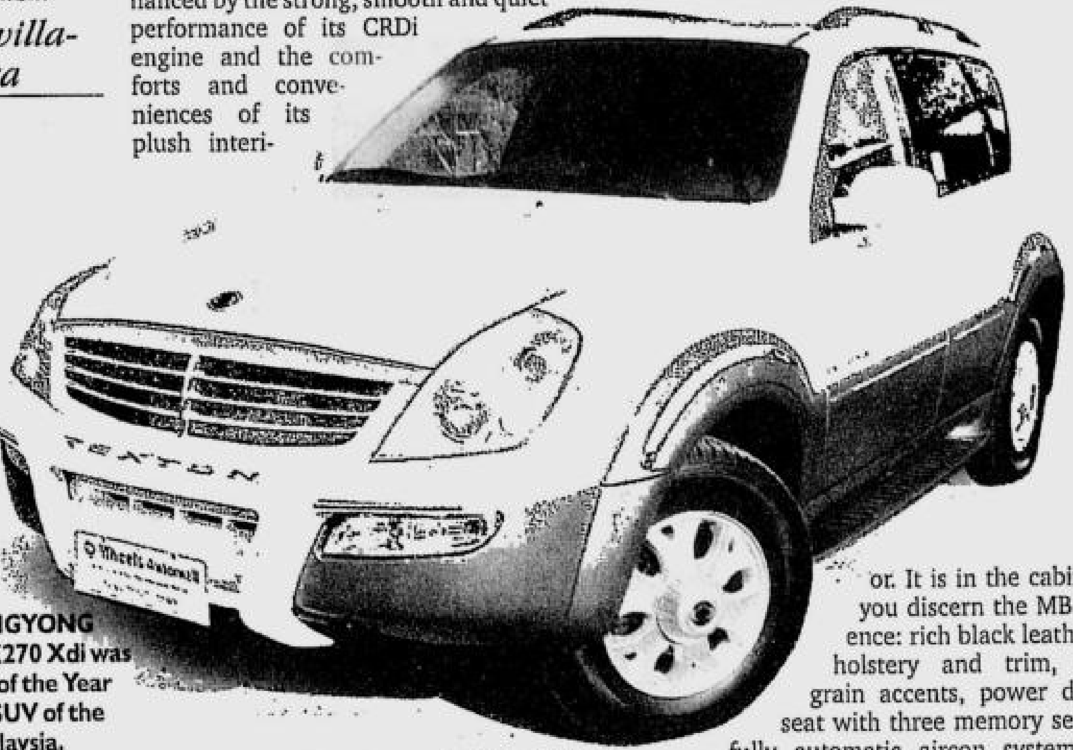
The Rexton's admirable CRDi engine is matched with MB's 5-speed T-Tronic intelligent automatic transmission that allows the driver to shift smoothly and effortlessly into the next gear or back into fully automatic mode. A luxurious, carlike ride is guaranteed by the Rexton's suspension system: double wishbone with coil springs up front and five-link with coil springs at the rear.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

For off-road driving in the part-time 4WD Rexton, you push a button on the dash to shift on the fly, selecting either 4WD High or 4WD Low. However, the Rexton does not appear to be built for serious off-roading.

The Rexton's ride quality on the road is enhanced by the strong, smooth and quiet performance of its CRDi engine and the comforts and conveniences of its plush interior. It is in the cabin that you discern the MB influence: rich black leather upholstery and trim, wood grain accents, power driver's seat with three memory settings, fully automatic aircon system with three rows of aircon vents, LED black-face instrument cluster, stereo system with CD player, steering wheel illuminated audio controls and six 120W speakers with woofers, digital multimeter, two air filters, ticket holder/center tray, blue-tinted side mirrors that can be electronically adjusted, folded or heated, cupholders galore, mobile illuminated ash trays, dual-lid center console, multifunctional overhead console, boot storage compartment under the cargo bay, tool box under the second row seats, two 12V DC power outlets, button-type coat hangers in the rear, a luggage net and a full-sized (P 235/70 R16) spare tire.

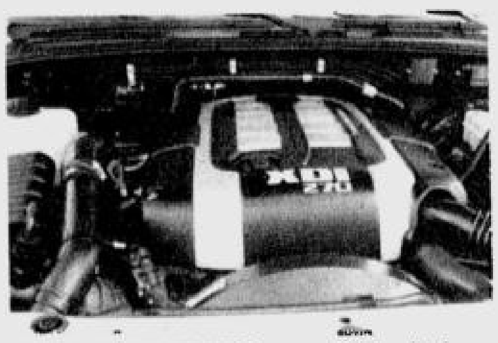


THE SSANGYONG Rexton RX270 Xdi was voted Car of the Year 2004 and SUV of the Year in Malaysia.

THE REXTON'S ear tailgate with chrome logo and rear spoiler with high-mounted stop light.

PHOTOS BY. AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA

THE REXTON RX270 Xdi's interior is as luxurious as a Mercedes-Benz's.



THE REXTON RX270's powerful 5 cylinder 168 hp, 340 Nm of torque CRDi engine.

PLUSH leather seats, plenty of leg room and their own aircon vents await passengers in the Rexton RX270 Xdi.

1,770 mm

The second row seat splits 60/40 and can be folded to accommodate golf bags and when the second and third row seats are folded, 1,770 mm of cargo space are created. The Rexton is advertised as a seven-seater, but the ideal passenger load is five since there is little leg room in the last row of seats.

The Rexton's elegant but muscular design and excellent build quality are noteworthy. Styled by the Italdesign studio Giugaro, the Rexton is distinguished from its 2003 predecessor by its lower body, sunroof, wider front grille, projector headlamps, stainless steel door sill inserts, chrome inserts in the garnish over the wheel arches, silver-colored roof rails, flip-up rear tailgate with chrome logo and flip-up glass, rear spoiler with LED high-mounted stop light.

With its P2.05 million price tag, the 2.7-liter, 5-cylinder, 168-hp, 4WD, T-Tronic CRDi Rexton RX270 costs P890,000 more than the 2.5-liter, 4-cylinder, 140-hp, 4x4 automatic transmission Kia Sorento CRDi; P530,000 more than the 2.8-liter, 4-cylinder, 125-hp 4x4 intercooled turbocharged diesel Mitusibishi Montero Sport; and P552,000 more than the newly launched 3.0-liter, 4-cylinder, 163 ps, 4x4 Toyota Fortuner CRDi. But that would be like comparing apples and oranges, wouldn't it?

***

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: "Criminal lawyer" is a redundancy.

***

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph)

Size matters

CATCH MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

WE all know that girth and measurement make a difference. Many of the women reading this column will, right now, swear to the fact that "mass appeals"—find me a woman who will not swoon and blush at the sight of a solid and glistening 5 karat diamond.

Some will argue the issue of quality versus quantity, as a true connoisseur of gems will vehemently contest the clarity and color of such a massive mineral. In cold reality though, walk into any society soiree with a size five rock and watch the jaws drop and the whispering begin.

This is the beautiful dilemma of the Chrysler 300C. It gets the social statement out to the public without having to be completely snobbish or uptight. It is a vehicle that unabashedly thumbs its nose at conservative convention and the *sosyal* status quo, doing this via a fresh new take on classic design while taking advantage of tried and true engineering available to the DaimlerChrysler group. We must ask ourselves, do cars have to be completely European to be credible with the "flash and luxurious" crowd?

Looks

With styling best described as "'30s American Industrial" meets "the Broadband Internet Age," this true full sized sedan's looks would blend perfectly into the storylines of the futuristic film noir world of "Blade Runner" or the gothic parallel universes of the Matrix saga. Its looks are unlike any vehicle on the road today and owners will be rewarded with the long stares and double takes that this vehicle craves and rightfully deserves.

The 300C's size and proportion is what "cuts the edge" and gives this Sci-fi looker true gait and bearing—"bling" if you will permit. One really needs to see it in person to feel the vibe that the car exudes; one of living large, going big and making a scene.

Optical illusion

With wheel arches that could probably accommodate an entire Smart For Two, the factory supplied 18" wheels play an optical illusion with us; as they wrapped in tires that are in themselves so huge the car looks like it comes with 15" or 16" rims. We will probably just have to wait for the inevitable, a 300C rolling on some insanely enormous wheel and tire package. Does anyone make a 24" deep dish, three-piece chrome rim?

Beyond the cool and the bling, there is substantially acceptable function underneath the striking form of this new "American" sedan. Built at a Canadian assembly plant, with a marquee on the hood distinctly Detroit, the engineering that drives the 300C is most definitely of significant Stuttgart origin.

Handling and suspension

Based on the previous chassis of the Mercedes-Benz E-Class, the car's handling and suspension attempt to slightly lean more toward the sport touring genre. Imagine that, ladies and gentlemen, an American branded car that handles decently. Basic proficiency in this performance aspect is already a very good thing, and the grip generated by the 300C's suspension actually inspires some confidence when attempting to corner the car with some enthusiasm.

Something that the stateside faction of the Chrysler 300C design team is very capable of and competent at is the engine department. Echoing the old school muscle car mantra of, "There's no replacement for displacement," the top line model comes with a 5.7-liter, 340 bhp, 525 Nm of torque, Hemi V8. The operative word in this engine gibberish is the word "Hemi," which roughly translates into "big engine, bigger power" in hot rod Native American and evokes the nostalgia of the 426 Hemi of the '60s and '70s.

Performance

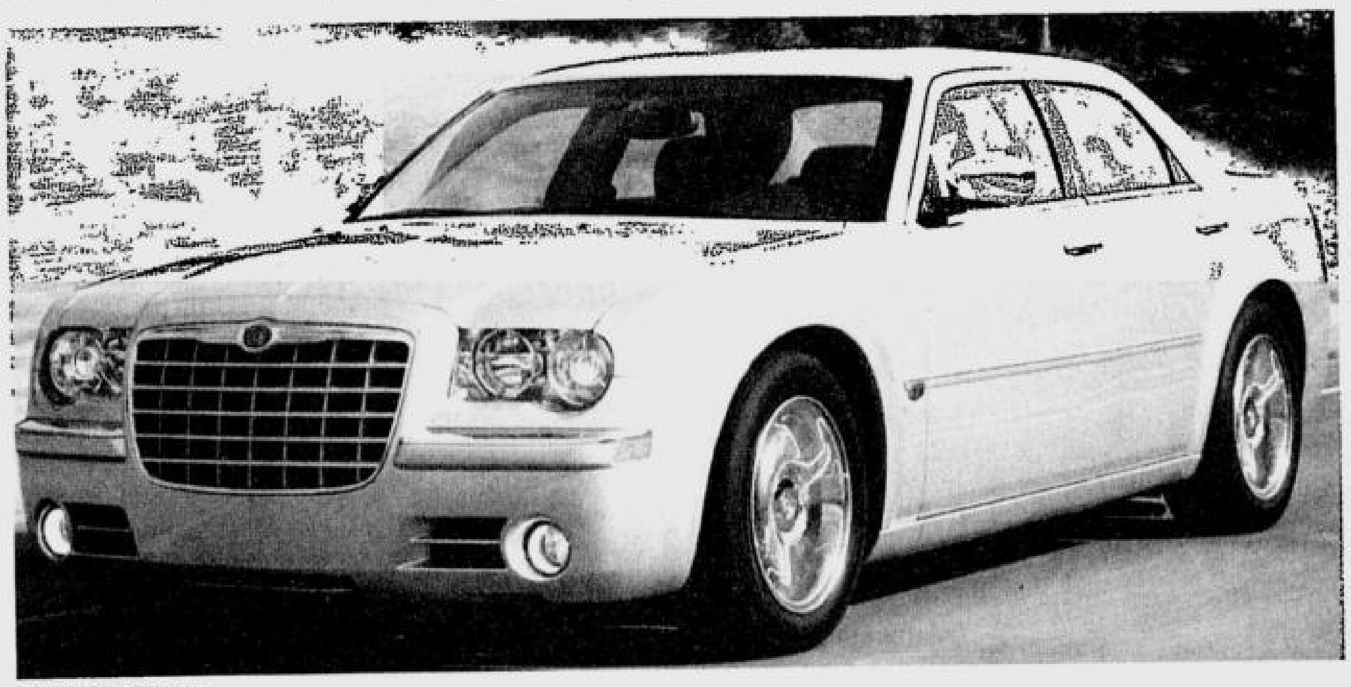
With a power plant of this heritage and endowment, the hefty 1836-kg car is rightfully sold as a vehicle with the soul of a straight-line performer. Chrysler further plays and elaborates the performance note with the choices of rear-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive formats, commonly found in the more established brands that extol the sale of speed and spirited driving.

Two other engines are available in the 300C lineup and are units shared with other models in the DaimlerChrysler stable. The most familiar is the showroom available 250 bhp, 3.5 V6 which also adorns the new E-Class and the SLK mini-GT coupé. A 2.7 vee six, with 190 bhp rounds out the line but feels out of place in a car whose marketing blitz stresses the "bigger is better" line.

Niche

Locally, the 300C does niche itself in the premium sedan market but is only somewhere around half the sticker price of its Mercedes-Benz cousins and the other quality competition from Munich and Ingolstadt. As a pure price proposition it is excellent but if you are asking it to replace a similarly appointed Autobahn "uber sedan," like an A6 Quattro, an E350 Avantgarde or a 530d M-Sport, it would be hard pressed. In the aspect of delivering a top-shelf driving experience, the triumvirate of German luxury performance is unsurpassed.

The 300C falls short of the telepathic handling offered by any true "driver's cars," but tantalizes the market with other, more visual, stimulation and value. This is a car that will excel at "arriving" at a destination, with aplomb and fanfare one will usually reserve for movie stars and media personalities. Should you see one in the near future, surrounded by the flash crazy paparazzi, don't discount that fact that they're probably sneaking shots of the 300C and not just the gilded ones who arrived in it.



CHRYSLER 300C

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines recalls 482 units of '98 Galants

MITSUBISHI Motors Philippines Corp. announced the recall of 482 units of '98 Galants to replace the power transistor and connector for the air-conditioner blower fan located under the glove box. The original connector may become loose when nudged and heat up resulting in the shutdown of the air-conditioner blower fan motor.

In the worst case the legs of the front passenger may get scalded by the heated connector. Although there has been no reported occurrence of blower fan connector overheating in the Philippines, MMPC was directed by Mitsubishi Motors to conduct the recall locally.

MMPC informed the Office of Secretary Juan B. Santos of the Department and Trade and Industry of the recall plan.

Kengo Takase, president and CEO of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, said MMPC has already mobilized its customer service department to trace the units from its customer data base. He said all the Mitsubishi Motors Philippines service centers nationwide have been alerted to replace the blower fan connectors and power transistor of the affected units completely free of charge.

If your vehicle is part of the listed serial numbers, please call Roy Aquino, Dick Vinuya or Dave Doctor of the MMPC Customer Service Department at 658-0719, 658-0087, or 658-0109 to 16 local 236 to arrange schedule of inspection.

The affected 1998 Galant 2.0 Super Saloon and 2.5 VR models have these serial/chassis nos.:

Model	Vehicle Identification No. (VIN)		Date of Production		Remarks
	From	To	From	To	
1. Galant 2.5 VR A/T	PAEEA5ASRVA000001	PAEEA5ASRVA000390	Oct. '97	Jan. '00	390 units manufactured by MMPC
2. Galant 2.0 Super Saloon A/T	PAEEA2ASRVA000001	PAEEA2ASRVA000090	Oct. '97	Dec. '97	90 units manufactured by MMPC
3. Galant 2.5 VR M/T	JMYSNEA5AVZ000106	n/a	Mar. '97		CBU from Japan
4. Galant 2.5 VR A/T	JMYSREA5AVZ000293	n/a	Mar. '97		CBU from Japan

Fortuner last piece in Toyota's IMV jigsaw

FORTUNER

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

TOYOTA Motor Philippines has finally completed its Innovative International Multipurpose Vehicle (IMV) lineup in the country with the recent launch of Fortuner at the Bellevue Hotel in Alabang, Muntinlupa.

The all-new sport utility vehicle is the company's final piece in the jigsaw joining the two other IMV vehicles already in the Philippine market: the Hilux pickup, which was introduced last December, and the Innova multipurpose vehicle, which was launched in February.

Toyota initiated the IMV project to create an optimized global manufacturing and supply system for pickup trucks and multipurpose vehicles to satisfy market demand in more than 140 countries worldwide.

Bold design

The Fortuner boasts of a bold exterior design, plush interior, optimum safety features and cutting-edge technology that sets it apart from Toyota's other SUVs—the RAV4, the Land Cruiser and the Prado—as well as of other brands' SUVs.

With the Fortuner, Toyota expects to strengthen its hold on the commercial vehicle segment. In a statement, TMP vice chair Alfred Ty believes, "The Fortuner arrives in the market with the best balance of an urban image complemented by its rugged and tough features. Decades of making vehicles with superior build quality have made Toyota vehicles the benchmark for the industry and this latest SUV will certainly deliver the same sort of renowned quality."

The Fortuner will be available in two variants: an automatic 4x4 3.0-liter diesel (with a price tag of P1.498 million) and an automatic 4x2 2.7-liter gasoline (which will be sold at P1.193 million).

Car-like

Like all modern day SUVs, the seven-seater Fortuner promises to provide car-like ambience, thanks to its design that reduces noise, vibration and harshness level considerably.

To supplement the advanced noise vibration and harshness reduction materials in the cabin area, Toyota engineers also equipped the Fortuner with double wishbone with coil springs and stabilizers in front and four-link with coil spring and lateral rod suspensions at the rear.

Plush Moquette covers all seats that are arranged in a spacious 60-40 split second row and 50-50 split third row.

The driver as well as the front passenger will certainly welcome Fortuner's two-tone dashboard, Optitron meter gauges, sporty four-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel, gate-type automatic transmission and a multi-information display CD/MP3-capable entertainment system.

Great sound is provided by a six-speaker system while cool cabin temperature is assured by its dual air-conditioning system with automatic climate control.

FORTUNER'S chief engineer Toshinori Goto

Top-of-the-line

The top-of-the-line Fortuner is powered by a 3.0-L direct injection common rail diesel engine mated to a full-time 4x4 drive-train and electronically-controlled automatic transmission system.

On the other hand, the 2.7-L four-cylinder variable valve timing intelligent gasoline engine is paired to a 4x2 drive-train and a similar 4-speed automatic transmission.

While one normally would not take this SUV on any mud-plugging or rock-crawling trips, the Fortuner, either the diesel or the gasoline variant, will definitely be able to handle most kinds of terrain.

Made by Toyota

The IMV project represents an unprecedented approach under a "Made by Toyota" banner that draws fully on the resources and potential of outside-Japan global production and supply bases for both vehicles and components.

Initiated in 1999, the project has three body styles—pickup, MPV and SUV—and four main production facilities on three continents.

The project calls for diesel engines to be made in Thailand, gasoline engines in Indonesia and manual transmissions in the Philippines and India, for supply to the countries charged with vehicle production.

"The Fortuner plays a vital role for Toyota. In the worldwide scene and also as part of Toyota's IMV project, the Fortuner is an international vehicle made with the highest standards. It is being manufactured in countries such as Thailand, South Africa and Argentina. From these countries, it will be driven in different roads all over the world—from Asia, Europe, Oceania, the Middle East, to Africa and Latin America," shares Ty.

IMV-series vehicle production including that in countries other than the four main production bases is projected to exceed 500,000 units next year.

Boo to SLEX; cheers to Fortuner, X-Trail

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THERE was this monstrous jam that struck Bicol-bound motorists at the Southern Luzon Expressway (SLEX) on Saturday morning, May 14.

No, it was not caused by either a vehicular accident or a vehicle stalled at the SLEX.

Neither was it caused by an ongoing road repair. There was none.

Organized confusion caused it. It emanated at the tollbooth going to Sto. Tomas, Batangas. The queue had reached kilometric proportions it cost me more than one hour before I could clear the tollbooth. And I had an E-Pass. Even those without an E-Pass were allowed to exit at the E-Pass Only exit. Grrr.

So terrible it was I was on a snail's pace like the rest of those caught in the traffic jam from the Southwoods exit. I was en route to Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City, and I almost missed my appointment. It was a good thing I left the house (Quezon City) at a little past 5 a.m. I arrived in Mount Malarayat about 7:45 a.m. That was more than one hour my usual travel time.

There were motorcycle cops in the area, but they were hardly any help.

So, what else is new?

It's about time the SLEX (its only saving grace is its superb Skyway) is also rehabilitated, the same way they did to the Northern Luxon Expressway. There's nothing more smooth today than a ride through NLEX.

* * *

I was impressed by a statement attributed recently to Alfred Ty, the youthful vice chair of Toyota Motor Philippines.

Said Alfred: "Being the undisputed industry leader, Toyota is a major partner in the task of strengthening the Philippine economy. Investments of Toyota, and its relating suppliers, have reached more than P17 billion as of 2004. Together with its dealership network, Toyota Autoparts Philippines and the Toyota supplier network composed of many small- and medium-scale enterprises, employs more than 12,000 people. Toyota has also remitted more than P52 billion in customs duties and taxes since its inception in 1988. In the international scene, the Toyota Group has exported more than US$380 million worth of parts. In 2005, the figure is projected to exceed US$420 million, the increase coming mainly from the IMV Project."

Wow! It's that big. We are talking here of billions of pesos Toyota has plunked into investments, happily making the economy an instant beneficiary. With its 12,000-plus employees, Toyota easily becomes one of the country's biggest employers. And that's just mainly through the auto parts aspect of Toyota.

And, of course, you know what IMV means—Innovative International Multipurpose Vehicles. Toyota's new generation IMV Project includes the recently launched Innova, Hi-Lux and SUV Fortuner. Check them out. I heard they are now on display at all Toyota dealerships nationwide.

The Fortuner, dubbed as the luxury SUV, is offered in 3.0-liter D4D diesel automatic transmission and in 2.7-liter VVT-i gas automatic transmission variants.

Said Alfred Ty: "The Fortuner plays a vital role for Toyota. In the worldwide scene and also as part of Toyota's IMV Project, the Fortuner is an international vehicle made with the highest standards. It is being manufactured in countries such as Thailand, South Africa and Argentina. From these countries, it is driven in different roads all over the world—from Asia, Europe, Oceania, the Middle East, Africa to Latin America."

Keep 'em comin', Alfred!

* * *

Here's a glass to the X-Trail, the No. 1 selling SUV in Japan in 2004.

X-Trail sold 30,845 units as per records from Japan's Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, according to Conrad Cariño.

"We were stunned by how strong the X-Trail sold in Japan in 2004, particularly how bigger its volume is compared to the combined volumes of the second and third best selling SUVs in Japan. And we are speaking here of all SUVs. Moreoever in Japan, sales are based on actual registrations—meaning the vehicles are already in the owner's possession," said Dennis Chang, AVP for Marketing and Sales at Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. (NMPI).

The 30,845 units X-Trails registered in Japan in 2004 were more than twice the volume of the second best selling SUV, the Toyota Prado (12,924 units). Rounding up the five top-selling SUVs in Japan are the Toyota RAV4 (12,025 units), Toyota Hilux Surf (9,011 units) and the Honda CR-V (8,695 units).

Speaking of Nissan, here's a letter from Honda's Arnel Doria by way of a tribute to the departed Vir Diwa:

I had the privilege to brush elbows with Mr. Vir Diwa in the Philippine auto market. Although we were working for two competing companies, I held him in high esteem and with deep respect as one of the few gentlemen left in the Philippine auto industry. He started his work in Nissan in 1982, during the days of DMG (Volkswagen fame). He developed his career in Nissan at the Parts Department, where he played a major role in creating the Mercury system (parts management standard) now utilized in Nissan's Global Management System. His last assignment was vice president for marketing and sales where he directed the successful launch of several Nissan models.

Last year, he took an extended leave of absence and came back in December to tender his resignation from NMPI. He passed away on March 30, 2005. I pray that he has found eternal peace in the heavens in the company of our Lord-Creator and our Savior, Jesus Christ. He is survived by his mother Natalia, wife Minda and two children, Noel and Jeffrey.

Arnel is right. I've known Vir since 1991, the year I started editing our Motoring Section. A very soft-spoken person, Vir was probably one of the last remaining gentlemen in the motoring business.

May God grant eternal peace to his soul.

* * *

QUOTE ME. It also pays to keep that warranty. My battery conked out recently and it was replaced—1 year and 2 days after I had bought it. Its warranty was for 18 months.

The case of the female car repair window shopper

From page C1

per Tracker laser light better than the computerized ones I saw?" Francisco replied, "Super Tracker makes alignment faster than computerized ones."

Entire suspension system

That meant the job wouldn't take an hour. Francisco added that Rapide's standard operating procedure would be to check not just alignments but also the entire suspension system.

But because of the long line of cars to be repaired that day (Rapide seemed to have a large customer base—and it showed during weekends), she wasn't able to have her tires aligned at Rapide.

The Good Year Servitek shop on Alabang-Zapote Road in Almanza, Las Piñas, charged P250 for the diagnosis of the tire alignment and a print out of the status of alignment work being done.

She was told at Good Year Servitek that front alignment would cost P295. Total alignment for the Civic would run at P1,700 (because of the rear camber, they said). By comparison, total alignment for a Toyota Corolla (with camber and caster) would cost P2,840, and P295 for either front and back without camber and caster correction.

Servitek's warranty lasts just 15 days after the alignment work.

Free diagnosis

Minervas Tyre Gallery in Westgate Center, Filinvest Alabang, featured four computerized aligners. The shop offers free tire alignment diagnosis. It charged P1,050 for front and back tire alignment for the Civic (with camber correction). Again, by comparison, a Corolla four-camber tire alignment would cost P2,100. The shop offered to align the car within an hour, and the warranty would last a month.

And because, unlike the overworked Rapide, Minerva had four aligners available at the time of her visit, this writer finally decided to have her car's tires aligned here.

Minervas mechanics then showed her the shop's Hunter computerized aligner programmed on Windows 2000. The results of each alignment maneuver were seen on the computer screen in 10 minutes.

The shops she visited, so far, were all grouped at higher income bracket customers. She then wondered if the smaller shops offered the same kind of services at the same prices.

Continuing her inquiry (without her Civic this time), she chanced upon a small auto repair shop quite popular among gasoline stations and other repair shops along Marcos-Alvarez Avenue in Las Piñas called GJ Salcedo Trading and Services Center.

The shop looked like your typical neighborhood *talyer* with naturally ventilated waiting areas (read: stand-beside-your-car-while-you-wait). But, surprise, surprise, this shop had a computerized four-wheel alignment setup, wheel balancing facility, machine-operated vulcanizing and many other services.

A discount at last

The service center charges P100 for tire alignment diagnosis. Front alignment costs P300, another P300 for the back. The job would take one hour or less. This author was offered a P100 discount if she decided to have all her tires aligned at the shop (that also meant the shop waived its P100 diagnosis fee). This was the only shop that offered her a discount. How flattering. The warranty offer for the alignment job was surprisingly long, at two months.

A Toyota Corolla alignment here would cost P2,000 maximum, according to shop owner Gerry Salcedo.

If Salcedo's shop boasts of a computer to read tire alignments, JVWheels Motor Workshop, dealer of brand-new tires and mags on Marcos-Alvarez in Las Piñas, makes use of laser lights—specifically Gorchi laser light—instead. Furthermore, it doesn't charge anything for diagnosis. It does charge P250 per tire alignment. Total alignment with camber correction costs P900. Total alignment can be finished in 30 minutes, with a warranty of one month.

Now, what about The Civic's own *casa*? How much would it charge to set its tracks straight? The Honda Alabang service center, which has a sprawling customers' lounge with free movie showing, charges P750 for toe-in, toe-out repairs. If there's a need for camber correction then the whole package costs P1,650. The warranty period is usually stipulated in distance, not time, which in this case would be set at 500 km. Other repairs would require warranty evaluators.

If you're in a hurry, herein lies the problem. The alignment job in the *casa* takes one whole day because the shop requires a road test. The *casa* double-checks the repairs thoroughly before and after wheel alignment. And Honda Alabang only has one aligner, for that matter.

Return to the source

If you have the time and the money, mechanic friends said, it is best to return to the source. The best parts and the best service are in places where people and machines are trained and built to make each car coming out of its shop run like new.

Just like shopping for clothes, or food, or shoes, any good businessman can produce and sell quality merchandise. Any car repair shop with a reputation to protect can work on your car and make it run well but nothing beats replacing an original with an original. As Bugs Bunny said, "If it's the captain's mess, let him clean it up."

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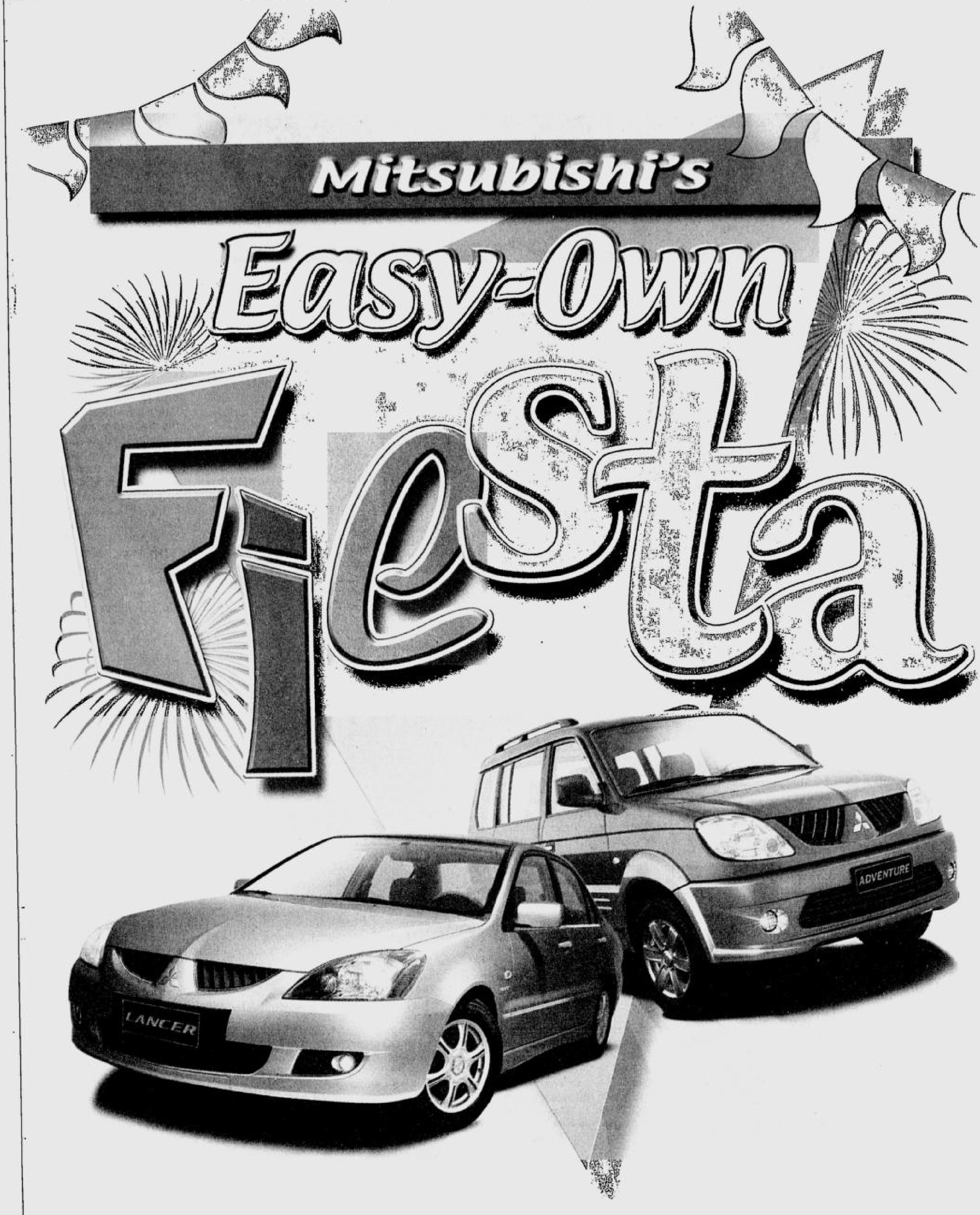

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

Hyundai vehicles up for testing

GET up close with Hyundai's latest line of vehicles as Hyundai Asia Resources Inc. (Hari), the vehicles' exclusive distributor in the Philippines, is taking them at the Fort Bonifacio open field for public testing on May 21.

Available for testing are the Getz, Tucson CRDi, Starex CRDi and Matrix CRDi.

Hyundai Getz has garnered high praises from different European media such as the United Kingdom's What Car? and Auto Express magazines that commended Getz for its smart styling, smooth ride and handling.

The manual Getz 1.1 and automatic 1.3 will be available for the Saturday event.

Elegant, creative

Hyundai Tucson, on the other hand, won the 2004 Good Design Award at the Japanese Industrial Design Promotion Organization for its elegant, creative but practical design.

Tucson also won the Grand Prix honor or "The Best Car" award at the 2004 Moscow International Motor Show.

Hyundai recently improved the Tucson with a state-of-the-art common rail direct injection engine that significantly advances the vehicle's drive quality, improves engine efficiency, and reduces noise and vibration, as well as lowers nitrogen oxide, (NOx) and dirt emissions level.

Familiar

Of course, many people are now familiar with the Starex, the Philippines' No.1 Van in 2004, based on the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. reports.

The Starex CRDi was also hailed Best Van/People Carrier of the Year in the 2004 Car of the Year Philippines Awards by the Car Awards Group Inc. with more than 40 of the country's premier motoring journalists voting unanimously.

Meanwhile, Hyundai Matrix CRDi, the first multi-purpose vehicle to be introduced in the Philippines, has already gained a niche in the market because of its spacious passenger cabin and profuse storage.

Matrix now offers another variant equipped with CRDi, further raising its caliber as a fuel-efficient people carrier.

Test drive event begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. Tokens and other freebies will be given away to participants.

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We hope the travel bug bites you and inspires you to make the most out of what's left of summer.
Take the plunge into your last big summer adventure. There are over 7,000 islands you can explore!

Viva Vigan! /F1

AUTHOR braving a 30-foot jump

Smells like free spirit

A golden adventure at Mindanao's gold city relives the swashbuckling days of old

Text and photos by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

KIDS are gutsy creatures. They walk around with scraped knees (and pick at the scabs, too) and swing from the highest treetop branches.

But all too suddenly, jumping from one rock to another seems like an awful waste of time—plucking eyebrows is more productive, after all.

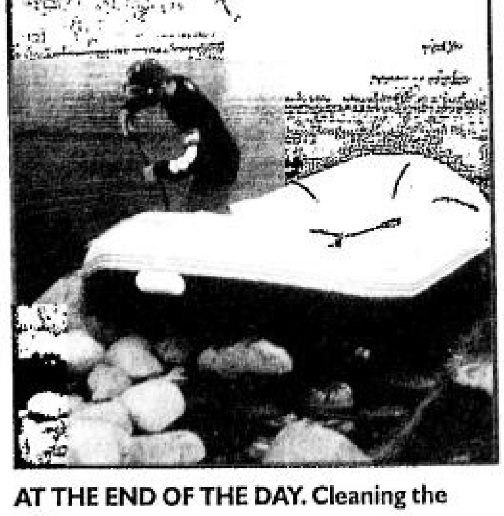
Then with a little more time, kids grow up to become responsible adults and settle into their comfortable lives centered on their careers and families.

They forget about their youth, when they went to the beach to swim and not to lie flat on the sand, when sunscreen was a hated aggravation, and when the only alcohol they knew was 70-percent Isopropyl.

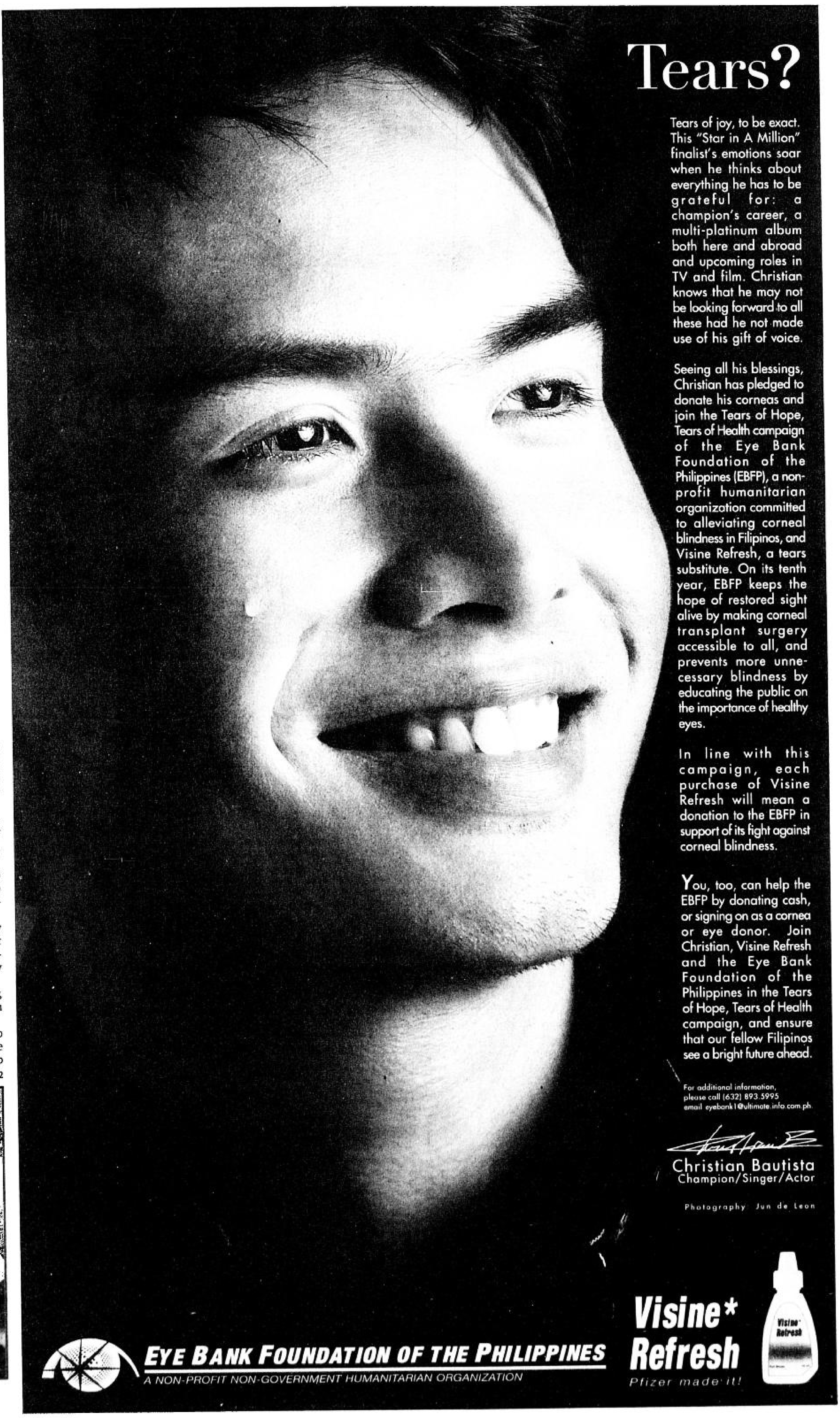
They forget the sensation of moving freely, of biking with no hands, of running down hills, of jumping into deep seas.

All but a few, of course. The ones who do remember spend their lives recalling the thrills of childhoods past with bungee jump

SMELLS/ D2



AT THE END OF THE DAY. Cleaning the rafts


Tears?

Tears of joy, to be exact. This "Star in A Million" finalist's emotions soar when he thinks about everything he has to be grateful for: a champion's career, a multi-platinum album both here and abroad and upcoming roles in TV and film. Christian knows that he may not be looking forward to all these had he not made use of his gift of voice.

Seeing all his blessings, Christian has pledged to donate his corneas and join the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You, too, can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Christian, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

For additional information,
please call (632) 893.5995
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Christian Bautista
Champion/Singer/Actor

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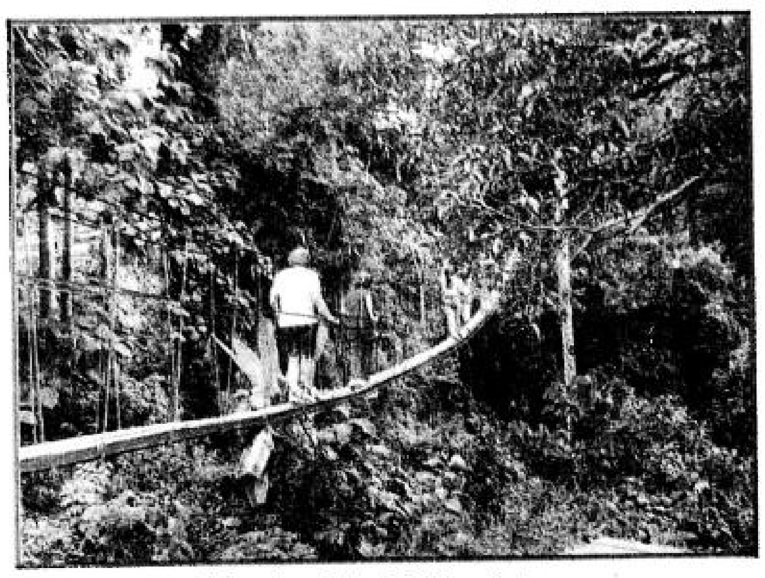
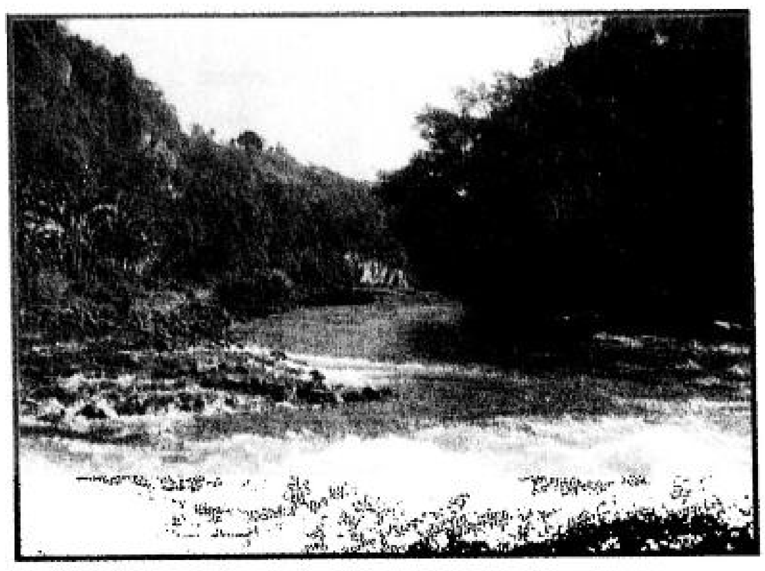


THIS BRIDGE is higher than it looks in the photo.



ROARING rapids

TO THE BATCAVE!

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Smells like free spirit

WILD ON WATER. Adventurous souls braving the rapids

FREE SPIRITS. Members of the Cagayan de Oro tou

NATIVES in their colorful costumes

WE'RE STILL DRY! A photo

From page D1

ing, skydiving, computer gaming and other life-threatening activities. Then they come home with the license to brag about their latest feats, while others gather around to shake their heads in wonder, envying their bravado.

I was recently given a chance to be one of those stout-hearted swashbucklers for one weekend in Cagayan de Oro, and being the competitive feminist that I am, could not resist the opportunity to put one over my more adventurous male friends.

You won't last, one such chauvinist predicted calmly while watching his daily intake of porn. How will your precious beauty products help you out in the wild?

Others went on in the same vein, placing bets on how long it would take me to jump off a 30-foot bridge in the Cagayan River.

Incensed, I proceeded to pack shorts, aqua shoes and other macho sporting gear along with pink floral Havaianas and lip and cheek stain (which held the bright, shining promise of being waterproof.)

As soon as we had stepped on Mindanao soil, Bing Francisco from the Philippine Tourism Authority briefed us on our itinerary. "We'll go on the Zip Line, then rappelling after," she said.

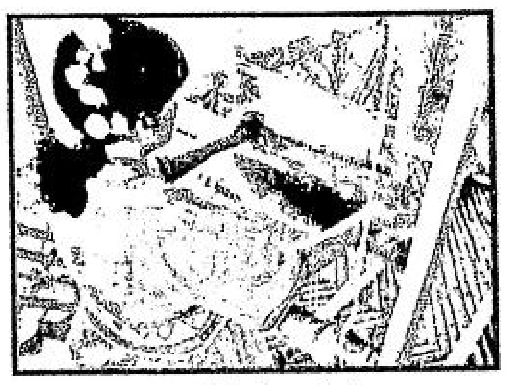
Cher, my traveling buddy, was as befuddled as I was. What was she talking about?

Cable shock

The Zip Line in Macahambus Nature Park, it turned out, was a simple cable suspended 150 above the ground—below, a shallow stream bubbled, inviting people to come and fall on its cool surface. A tangle of trees waved their arms below, beckoning travelers to sleep forever on its roots. Simply said, the gorge was deep and terrifying. And the only way to get to the starting point of the Zip was to cross a scrawny hanging bridge, which looked like the stuff horror movies are made of.

Initially, many of us in the group stalled, looking for excuses to delay our turn on the Zip. But just as we were checking the depth of the gorge for the 37th time, Mang Kuhne, a sixty-something-year-old writer from another daily, sailed over our heads, landing smugly on the ground. After that, there was a rush for the helmets and harnesses. No one wanted to be outdone by a grandpa.

ENTRANCE to Macahambus Nature Park



WEAVING colorful cloth on the loom

PASTEL fresh from the oven at Vjandep

Apparently, the scrawny bridge wasn't so scrawny at all—the guide explained, "It will take 40 tons to break this bridge, and as long as there is a harness in your size, you can cross the Zip Line."

Although we didn't go rappelling, we hiked to the bottom of the gorge and oohed and aahed over the lush vegetation at the bottom, while some dipped their hands into the clear stream.

I didn't bother with being demure—I took off my shoes and waded right in, and everyone else in the group took photos of the fool who polluted the water.

We finished off the day with bowls of *halo-halo* and seafood (which proved to be more of a struggle than the Zip—I could hang on a cable line by myself, but shelling a crab is still a mystery to me.)

The first few minutes of the next morning were spent bathing in sunscreen, as we were warned that the five-hour white water rafting trip would be tough on the complexion.

Hitting the rapids

Emboldened by the previous day's success, we eagerly strapped on our life vests and helmets and jumped into the yellow canvas rafts, fully expecting to be blown away by a string of rapids in quick succession.

However, the six-hour, 12-kilometer journey proved to have more long stretches of calm water than rapids, but not to any great loss—after being attacked by some very determined rapids, it was refreshing to paddle slowly and take in the lush valleys surrounding the river, which is the barrier between Cagayan de Oro and Bukidnon.

But one of the highest points in the entire expedition, which could give any wild rapids a run for their money, was the jump from the 30-foot-high bridge into the river.

However, our Indiana Jones-style adventure was dampened by the sight of a cluster of tanned little children nonchalantly jumping from a rock nearly as high as the bridge itself.

Nonetheless, we clambered up the dusty cliff and lined up for our jumps. It would be a good idea to not psyche yourself about the jump until you are actually about to do it—the woman before me whimpered and swooned before jumping off, and consequently fell on her side in what looked like a very painful splat. (The best position is to fall with your toes pointed towards the water.) She discouraged a lot of other people, who instantly went back to the rafts, and almost made me step back, but the voice of my chauvinist friend echoing in my ear egged me on.

The feeling is unique, especially for those who are not prone to adventure. Roller coasters and free-fall rides cannot recreate the odd lurching of the stomach (for one thing, you know you're almost always safe on the rides.) A few seconds after stepping off the bridge, I realized I still had the time to look at the water and think, "I'm still falling!"

I went for a second jump, partly to relive the feeling and partly to be able to brag to my friends that I jumped from the bridge twice and they didn't. Done properly, the free fall is not painful at all, although the force of the water pulling you up combined with the crotch straps of the life vests could make you feel, as a friend put it, "as if you've poked a bamboo pole through your rear."

Snake pit

After a couple of hours of rafting, we stopped for lunch in a small island. An hour later, we came upon a cliff that the guides called "Snake Preview."

During the summer, our boatman explained, snakes came out of their holes in the rocks and preferred to wrap themselves around the cool, leafy branches in the cliff. This was why there were lots of dry snakeskins hanging from the branches, he continued.

He then went on to tell us of several other groups who, intrigued by the brightly colored snakes, shook the branches to make them move.

Inevitably, he said, the snakes fell into the raft and the tourists jumped into the river. But there is a breed of aggressive snakes that actually chase the raft, the guide concluded. All this was said with the air of someone discussing the weather.

Naturally, we had a couple of curious tourists in our raft (who wanted to shake the branches, of course), but filled with visions of yellow-and-black snakes chasing me, I paddled away from Snake Preview with a strength that overcame the seven other people in the raft.

"You were so hyper," someone from another raft told me later on. "Where do you get your energy?"

The last leg of the journey was marked by a picturesque cave surrounded by shallow but strong rapids. Apparently, it was a nice place for photo shoots—several publications had braved the rapids just to shoot in that particular spot.

Awed by the raw beauty around us, several of us proceeded to strip down to our swimsuits and defiled the place by having our own FHM-inspired shoot, the photos of which will never see the light of day.

After six hours, our group went back to the Gardens of Malasag Eco-Tourism Village. After snacking on pastel and empanada to tide us over until dinner, we ate at a restaurant where they (thankfully) served meat as well as seafood, and afterwards paid a visit to the night market in Divisoria.

Exhausted after dueling with the Cagayan

HAIR RELAX P80.
HAIR
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FootSPA P75.
PAHIYAS, PIKUNA UG BALANGA SA ILOM.... P50.
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HAIRCUT, anyone?

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recreate the feeling of be
year-old, but a six-hour ride

E-mail biancaconsunji@y

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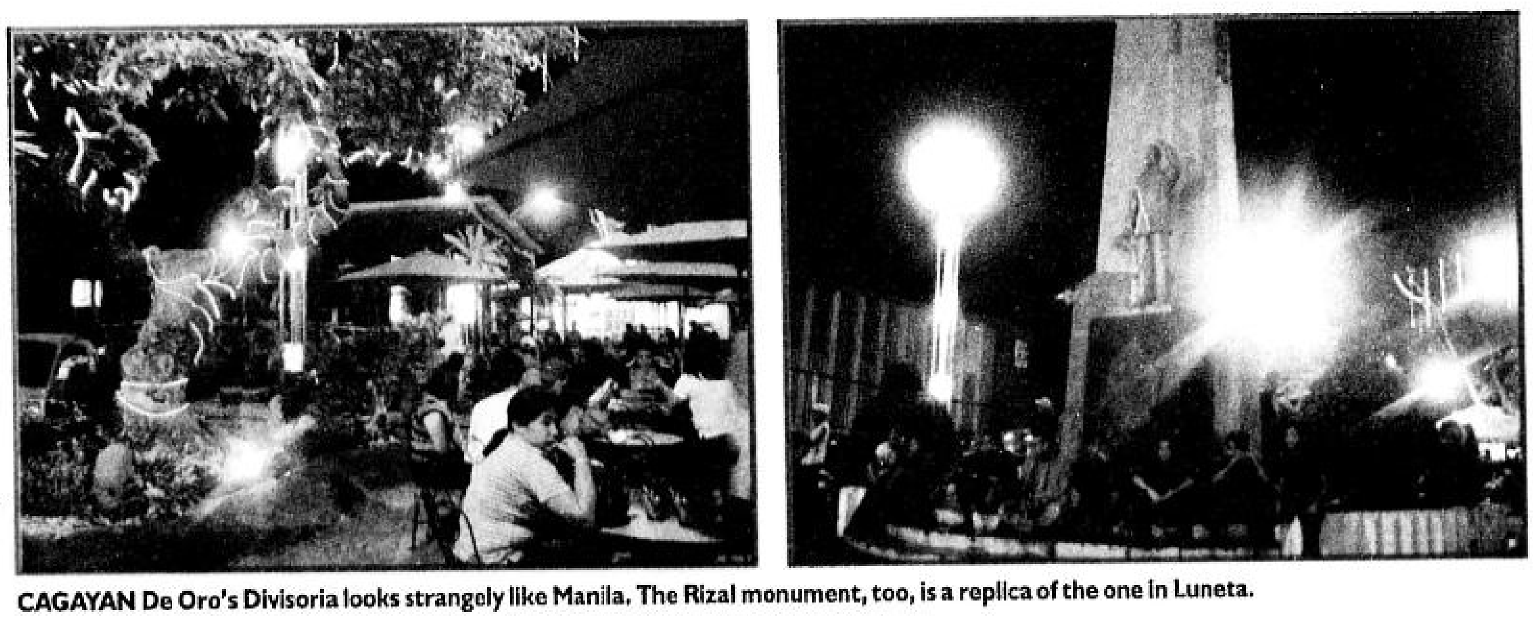

CAGAYAN De Oro's Divisoria looks strangely like Manila. The Rizal monument, too, is a replica of the one in Luneta.

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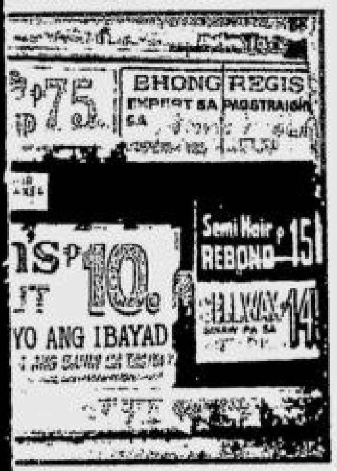
ISEL IN DISTRESS. Getting ssist after a turn on the Zip

r pause for a photo op.

taken before the ride



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food to clothing and ac-
ices.

Give these colors a chance

Lora Gabol

SURE we love subtle, natural nudes when it comes to makeup. Sure, vivid, bold colors might be too much to paint on regularly. And sure, most of us do look better without cosmetics on.

I discovered how the fun of makeup lies in discovering that the colors you assumed would never land on some parts of your face actually work once they do! Just as my little makeup experiment has proven, it's time to give those colors a chance.

Eye wonder

Think pink. Many think bubblegum pinks belong strictly below the cheekbones. Some subtle pinks actually work to brighten the eye area—as long as you pick the right shade. Light pinks are great alternatives to bone or white shadow when picking your base, and it works for both fair and dusky gals. Try Maybelline Roller Color in Roller Rink Pink.

Tip: For depth, try blending it in with light lilacs. For more definition (which evening looks require), line your upper and lower lash line with a dark brown or black liner, and put on a coat or two of mascara.

White wash. White too drab? Think again! This works amazingly well with dark skin. The secret is in blending—make sure you use a smooth formula that doesn't crease. For makeup newbies, start out with white eyeliner to make those peepers pop.

A good buy is Shu Uemura Eye Light Pencil in White. This dual-ended pencil has both a matte and pearl formula for flexibility. Go shimmery for subtle glam and matte for graphic drama. Don't forget the mascara!

Lip trip

Purple power. The last color any regular girl would consider putting on her lips is violet. At first glance, purple shades just don't make any sense on anyone's pucker. But surprisingly, purple could work in giving you a fresh glow.

The must? A sheer formula. Plum lip stains are great budge-proof picks for girls on the go, but my personal fave is Shiseido Sheer Gloss Lipstick in Violet Tint.

Golden girl. Is gold too much of a gilt-y pleasure for your smackers? Says who? Again, if done with sheer products, gold on your lips just looks naturally luxurious without going over-the-top.

Try a gloss formula for when you want to shine. Shu Uemura Sweet Lip Gloss in Jasmine Gold is the yummiest one out there—and it's great when mix-and-matched with other shades.

Cheeky cues

Red diaries. Red on your cheeks won't mean a clown face if you pick the right kind of red. As opposed to pinks, red actually looks more natural on some complexions, especially if you have natural red undertones.

How to tell? Check your color when you naturally blush, or after you work out. If it's closer to red, then you'll look great with a scarlet blush. Try cream-based blushers like Pout Flush Blush in Raunchy Rouge.

Love cheek tints but don't think they work on you? You must be using the wrong shade! Don't get intimidated by an orange flush, especially if you're on the tan side. Most *morenas* respond well to this bold color.

Mistine Lip and Cheek Tint in Orange is the sheerest one you can find, and probably the most affordable.

E-mail the author at lora_gahol@yahoo.com

Passion for playtime

KEEP summer's heat at bay with Bum Equipment and Bum G!'s ice-cool collection of trendy playtime fashion.

The brands' hot season wearables hark back to the fun and action-plenty days of youth with retro, sporty, floral and striped numbers.

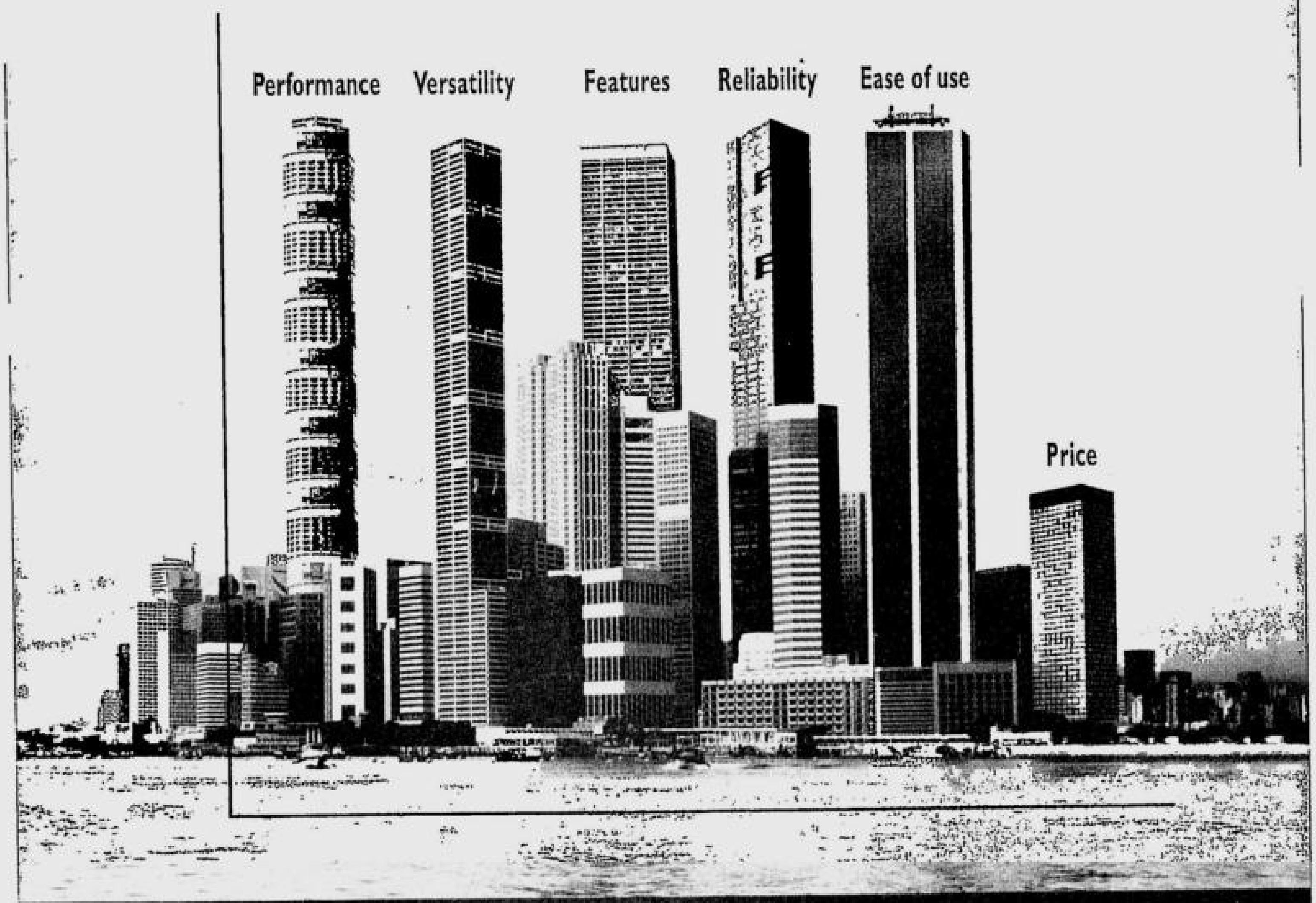
For guys, there are colorful tees with prints or appliqués, smart tracker caps, full placket woven polo, bright shirts with double effect and tri-fit tees with nifty prints.

The Bum G! gal has sexy tank tops, romantic ruffled skirts, vintage washed jeans and trendy bags.

This May, guys will also get a limited-edition Bum Equipment cap for every purchase worth P500 and above, while girls get to bring home free Kyla Concert Princess limited edition accessories for purchases worth P350 and above. Catch this promo at all SM department stores nationwide.

Bum Equipment and Bum G! are also available at all leading department stores nationwide.

ON KYLA: spaghetti-strap top with special print (P229.75), basic denim pants with sun blast (P699.75). On Danilo: Round-neck shirt with print and double-effect detail (P349.75)



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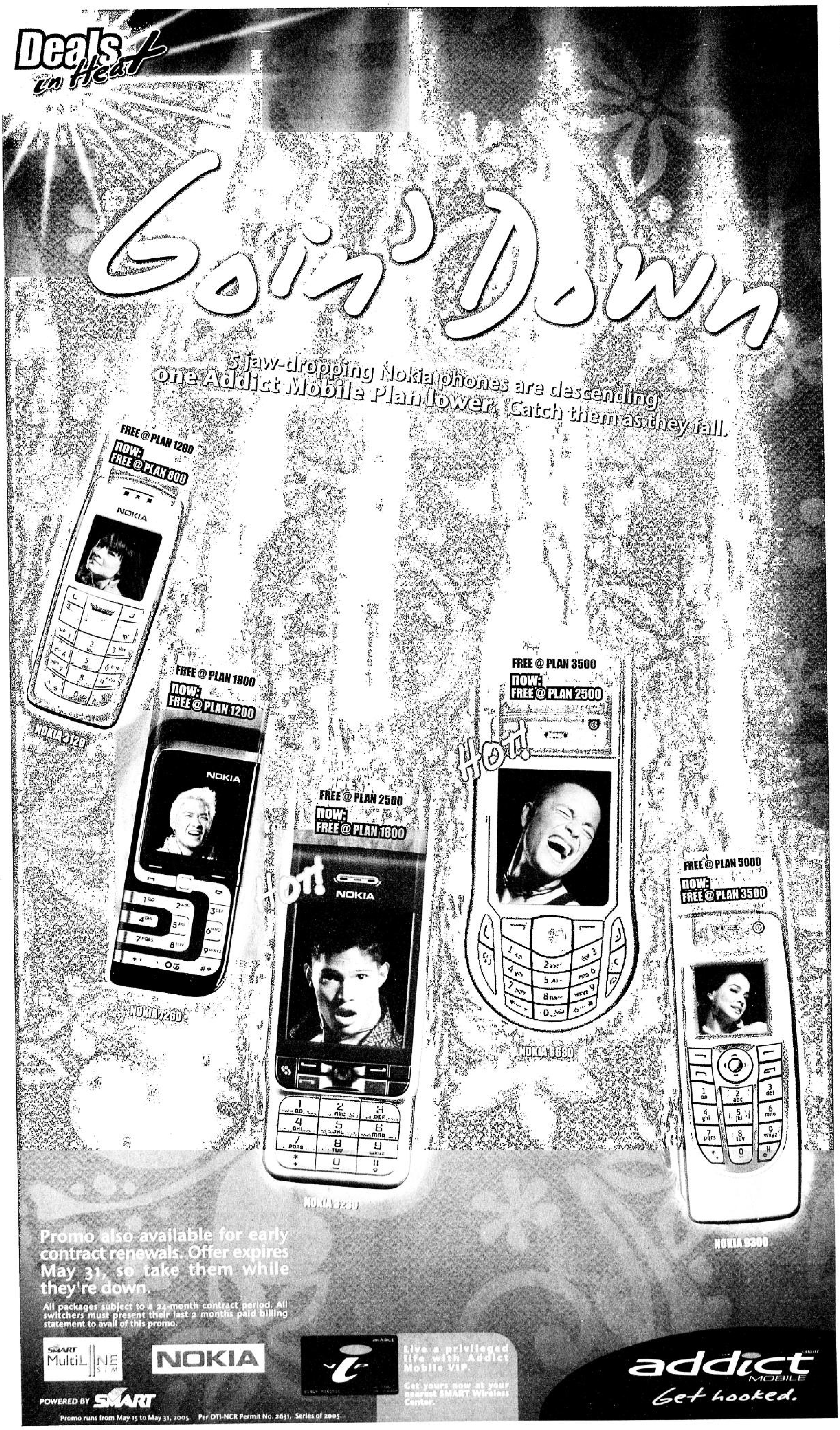

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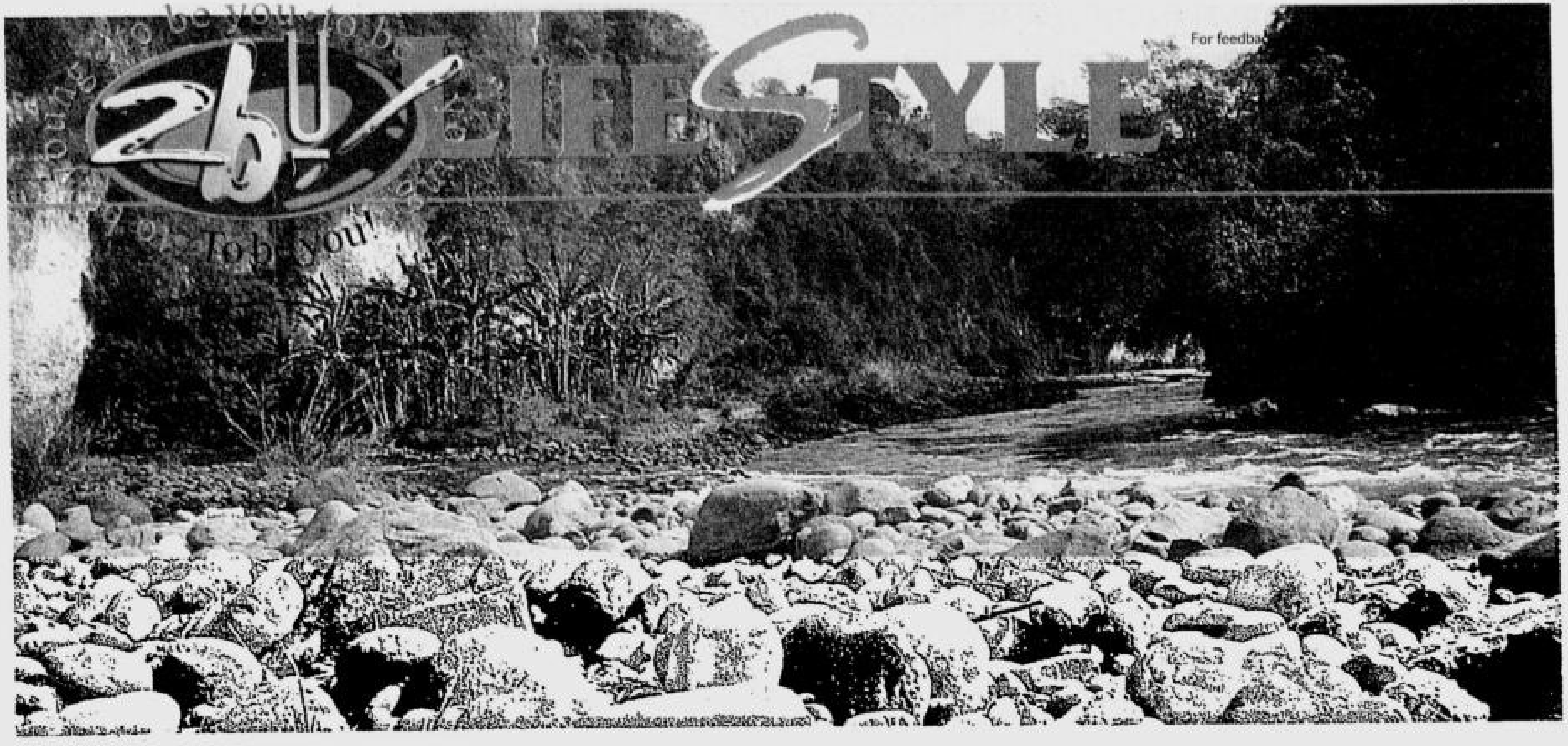
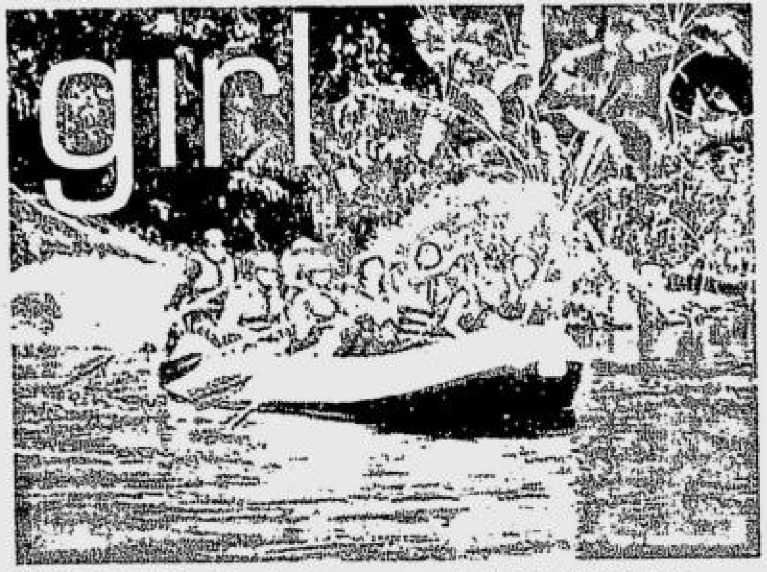


I Have a huge aversion to sports and the outdoors, but over a weekend in Cagayan de Oro, I surprised myself

CAGAYAN de Oro River

Nature's new girl


WHITE-WATER rafting has become popular in Cagayan de Oro.

Text and Photos by Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

I HAVE a huge aversion to nature and sports. I prefer spending my summers in Manila than in Boracay. I prefer exquisite views of city skylines over lush green forests and pristine mountains. I prefer being encased in concrete walls shielded by a cement roof than being smothered by fresh air and tinted by the glowing rays of the sun. And I prefer sitting in front of my laptop than sweating over any form of exercise.

So when I told my friends I would be spending a weekend white-water rafting in Cagayan de Oro, I was became the recipient of bouts of laughter and mockery. Yes, Mother Nature was finally getting her revenge on me.

But over one weekend, I surprised myself by stemming some unexpected, newfound appreciation.

Natural high

For starters, I found out that traversing mountains strapped only to a cable imparts the greatest natural high.

At the Macahambus Adventure Park, we were to cross the sky bridge and zip back on a mere cable—both 150 feet above ground! I was terrified, but before I knew it, I was being strapped with a headgear and harness, and I was off along with the first batch.

Crossing the sky bridge was a heart-wrenching experience. Every step forward provoked the narrow bridge into a rickety swing which incited panic attacks and roused the contemplation of my mortality. I was suddenly regretful I had not gone to confession yet.

Finally we made it, only to face another challenge. Our harnesses were supposed to be clipped onto the cable and we were supposed to slide across the mountains strapped only to a cable. It was like riding a cable car—only without the car. I quickly made the sign of the cross, clutched the rope with my life—and slid.

What I thought would instigate a cardiac arrest turned out to be the most fun and exhilarating slide of my life. It wasn't scary at all! Rather, I felt like I was flying, and I wanted to go again and again.

Cool experience

We also tried exploring caves. We entered an unspoiled cavern that led to a stream with pristine water. All around were gorgeous stalactites. I then realized that caves were probably my most favorite form of nature—a sense of appreciation for something I used to look upon with disdain.

Up next was white-water rafting. There are only two white-water rafting sites in the Philippines, and the one in the Cagayan de Oro River has been gaining much popularity.

The 14-rapids course takes about five to six hours to complete. We were briefed on how to paddle and what to do if our boat capsized.

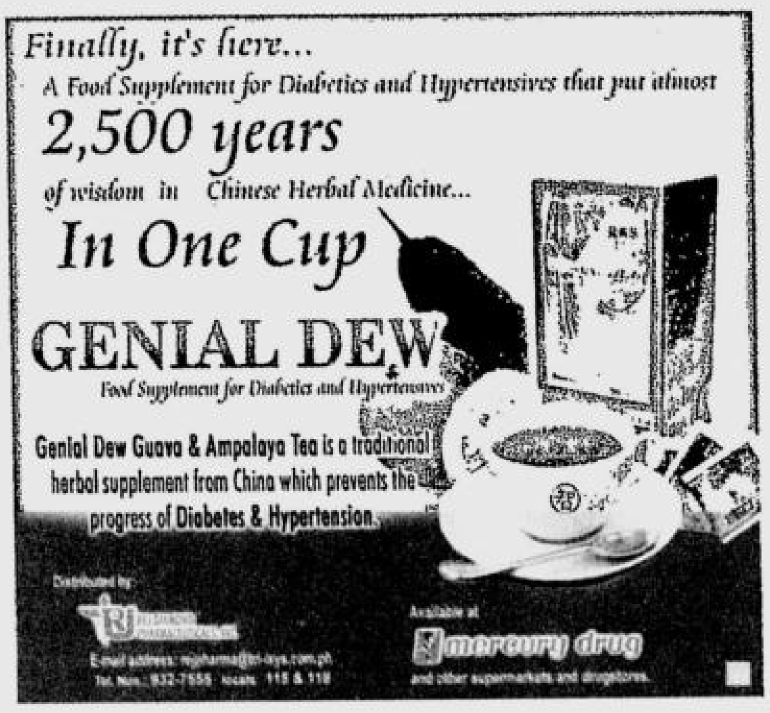
Paddling wasn't a problem, but in order for us to move forward efficiently, we all had to do it simultaneously, so we counted out loud in unison.

Cascading along the rapids was the best. The sheer moment of elevation followed by the plunge a second later made me wish there were endless rapids for the entire 12.32 km stretch.

Chicken run

When we docked for our lunch break, I didn't realize my alektorophobia (otherwise known as as a phobia for chickens) would be exposed. My heart started pounding when I caught sight of a chicken sauntering around the tables.

NATURE'S/ E2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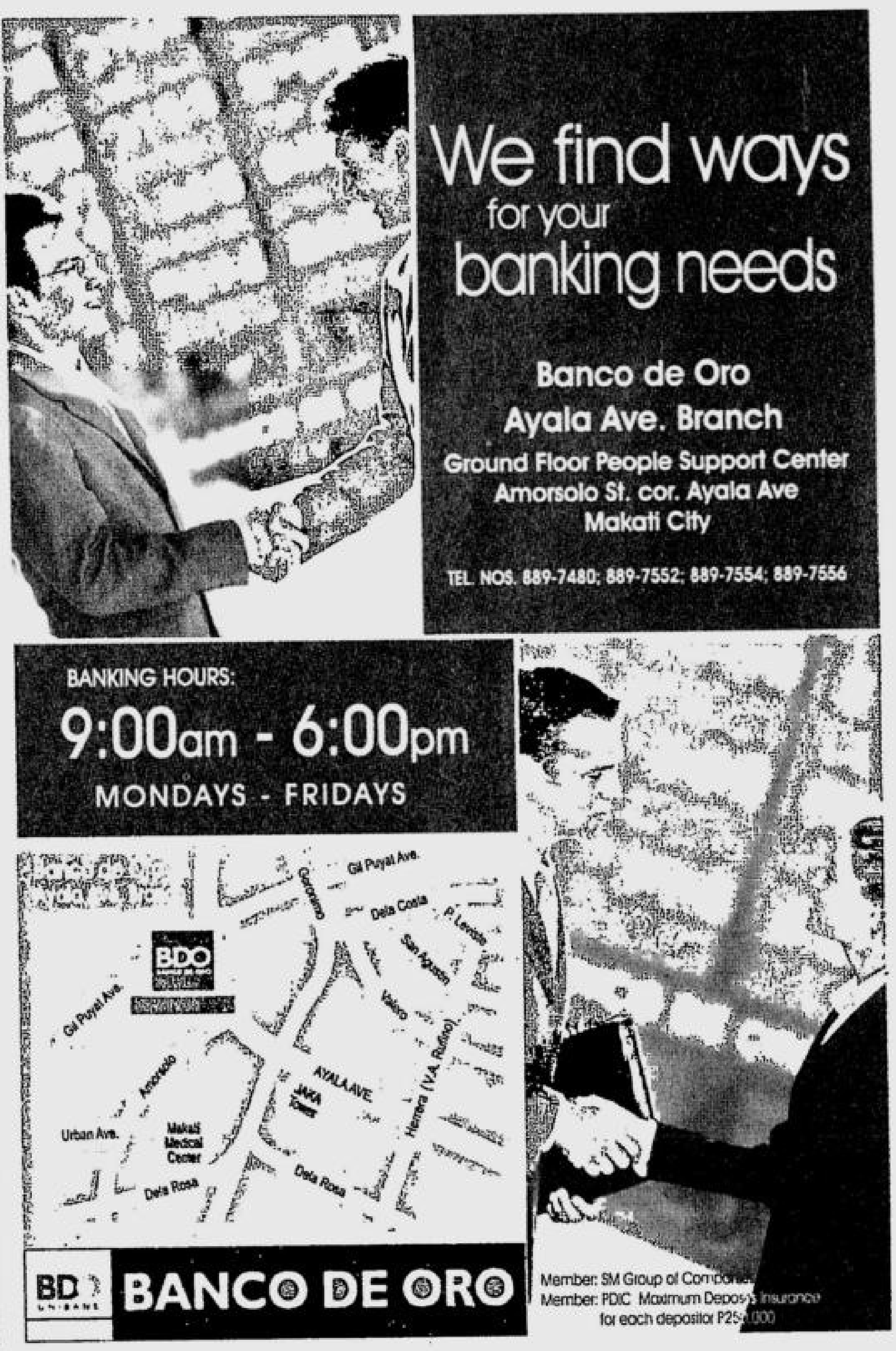
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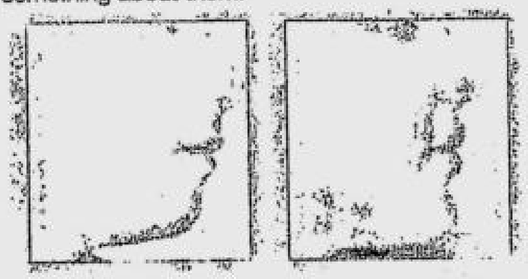
Persistent Acne Problem?

LightCure Acne Therapy is the solution!

You thought that when you reach your 20s your repulsive teenage acne would stop bothering you. So what are these persistent acne doing on your 30s or 40s face?

Beginning in your 20s, skin eruptions should have settled down. However, due to genetic, environmental, dietary or stress factors, or even negligence, we may still continue to breakout with huge acne up until our adult years, unless we do something about them.



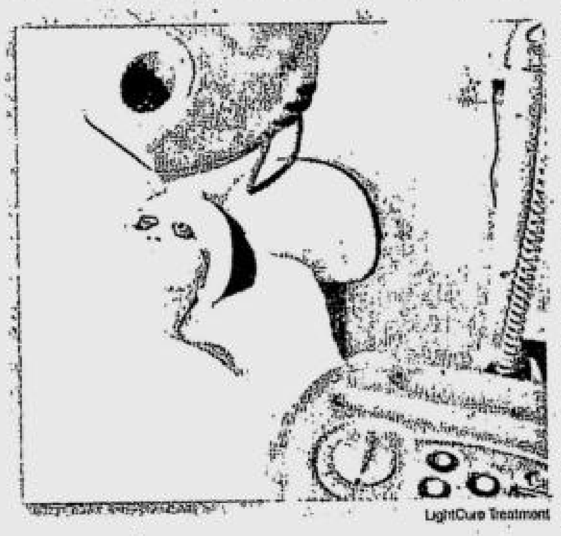
Well, there's good news for people bothered by persistent acne. Facial Care Centre, the country's leading skincare center, once again brings in the latest technology for the treatment of moderate to severe acne – LightCure Acne Therapy – the new selective photoclearing system that brings fast, safe relief to acne-prone skin.

"LightCure Acne Therapy is a treatment for all types of acne (pimples) for all ages," says Facial Care Centre's in-house dermatologist, Dr. Isabelita Joya. "It uses the emission of exact wavelengths of light at the most effective intensity for maximum photo-destruction of acne bacteria and reduction of skin inflammation. Pricking, pills or injections may not be needed at all."

Asked how the treatment works, Dr. Joya explains, "A special kind of bacteria called propionibacterium acnes (p.acnes) is responsible for the inflammation of acne lesions. LightCure works by using high-intensity blue-violet light that activates photosensitizers called porphyrins, produced by these bacteria in the sebaceous glands. When porphyrins are activated by the high-intensity of light, they start a chemical reaction that produces peroxide, which in turn, selectively destroys the p. acnes bacteria, without harming surrounding tissues."

LightCure Acne Therapy is scientifically proven and is a unique, FDA-approved, 21st century cutting-edge technology. While other wavelengths are considerably less effective, LightCure carefully selects the most accurate and effective blue wavelength of light for acne treatment and decrease of skin inflammation for all ages. Proven safe, hygienic and effective on all skin types, it also decreases the risk for scarring and pigmentary change, usually with a long-lasting preventive effect.

LightCure Acne Therapy clearly makes a difference. Within only a month of treatment, it brings dramatic improvement to pimple-ridden or acne-tormented skin, without aftereffects. The treatment is simple, painless, and is 3 times faster than any other acne treatment – without disruption to your lifestyle! Clients can sit or lie comfortably and listen to relaxing music, while undergoing treatment. An additional benefit, LightCure can treat acne on any part of your body.


LightCure Treatment

It is endorsed and used by leading skincare clinics across five continents, demonstrating long-lasting proven success. Indeed, LightCure Acne Therapy has gained immense popularity among celebrities and models in the international scene. And within only a few months of introduction to the Philippines, it has already become an instant favorite of Facial Care Centre's clients.

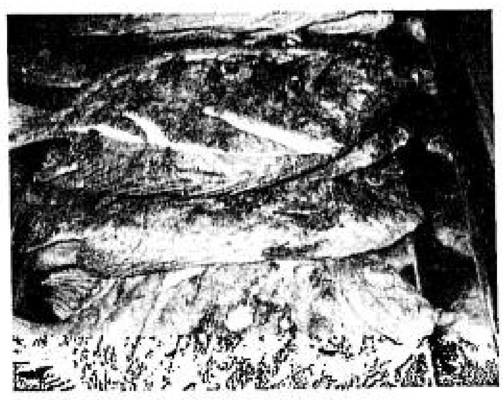
LightCure Acne Therapy is no doubt the real solution to your persistent acne problems. To know more about LightCure Acne Therapy or to schedule an appointment, just call the Facial Care Centre professionals at **892-SKIN.**

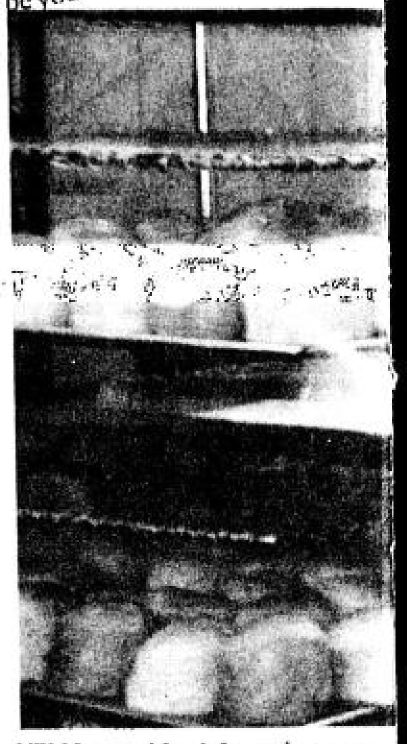
BEFORE
AFTER
BEFORE
AFTER
Before and After LightCure Acne Therapy

KINILAW, Cagayan de Oro-style

STEAMED crabs

Cagayan de Oro's distinct culinary tradition comes spiced with ginger and sweetened by fruit


GRILLED fish (*sinugba*)


YEMA pastel fresh from the oven

Food tripping in Cagayan de O

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Bianca Consunji

1. THE GARDENS of Malasag Eco-Tourism Village resto-café serves some of the best *kinilaw* (a localized version of the tuna sashimi that uses *suwa*, *tabun-tabun*, coco-vinegar and ginger), grilled squid, *ensalada* (eggplant, okra, tomatoes and onions), *halaan* (clam) soup, buko soup, etc.

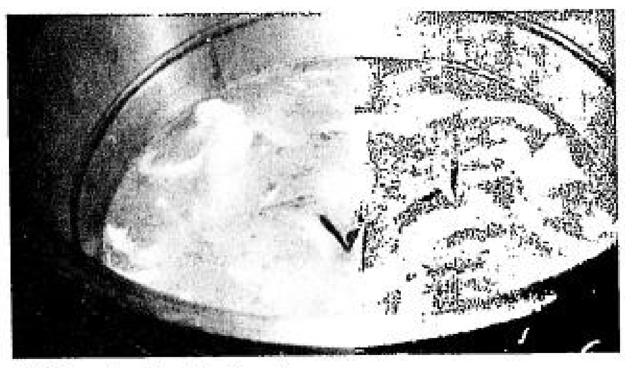
2. Sunburst offers a *halo-halo* buffet for only P69. With generous portions of *leche flan*, *ube*, *ube* ice cream, jellies, beans and cornflakes, the resulting concoction is sheer heaven.

3. Panagatan, which literally translates to "fishing area," is a series of long cottages connected by a bridge by the river's edge that has become one of the most popular seafood restaurants in Cagayan de Oro. Mouth-watering dishes include the crispy shrimp, *kinilaw*, barbeque chicken, *bulalo* soup, tuna belly and crispy *pata*.

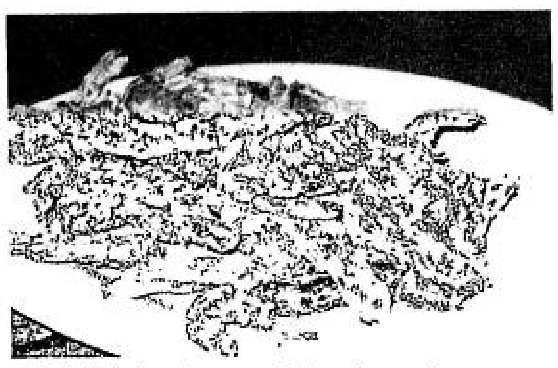
4. Park Café is conveniently located at the City Golden Friendship Park in Divisoria and is probably the most attractive café in the area. It offers a diverse selection of coffee and chocolate concoctions and desserts at bargain prices. It is also a very short walk away from the night market.

5. Vjandep is the original maker of the pastel, the incredibly scrumptious soft dough coffee bun that is Camiguin's pride. While *yema* is the most popular filling, other yummy options are *ube*, *macapuno*, *langka*, pineapple, mango and *durian* (by special order).

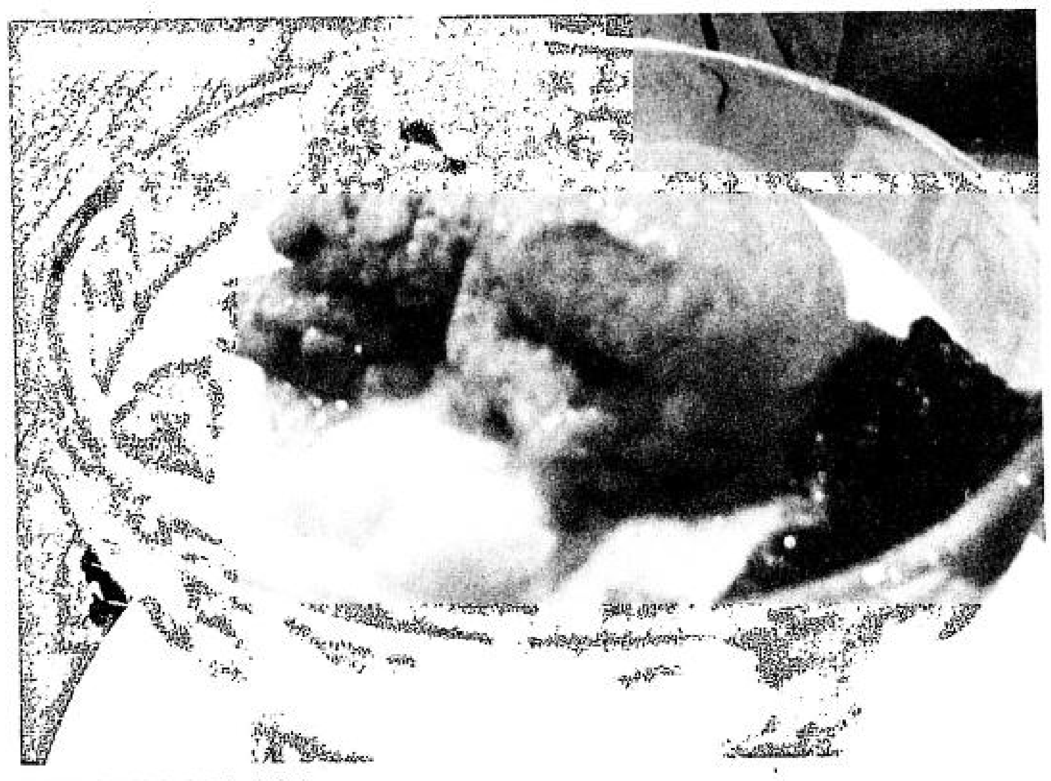
E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com


FISH cooked in *buko* broth

SWEET *empanada* and pastel, two of Camiguin's specialties


CRISPY shrimp from seaside restaurants

GRILLED tun


SUNBURST Cafe's *halo-halo*

Sweet, spicy and

Text and photos by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

FOR SOME reason, someone put it in my head that "CDO," the meat brand, came from Cagayan de Oro. Thus, I thought there was a lot of meat to be found there. Well, there is, but seafood seems to take center stage in this city.

In fact, most of the dishes we tasted in Cagayan de Oro were seafood-based— fresh fish, crab, and shrimp, although there were also a lot of pork dishes.

A popular way to serve fresh fish in Cagayan de Oro is *kinilaw* (raw fish soaked in *tuba*, and garnished with tomatoes, strips of bell pepper and ginger), although fish is also often grilled ("*sinugba*").

In fact, there is an ingenious method of cooking meat as well as fish called "*sinuglaw*—"a combination of *sinugba* and *kinilaw*.

Food is often cooked with ginger. Many of the dishes we tried were spiked with the tangy root, though they still retained their natural flavors.

No extra sauces are used with the dishes. But those used to dipping their food in *patis*, vinegar, soy sauce or *calamansi* won't be disappointed. Since very little fat is used to cook the food, the juices of the seafood and the meat are kept intact, thus eliminating the need for *sawsawan*.

Sweet pineapples

Fresh fruits are also abundant in Mindanao. For dessert, we were served some of the sweetest pineapples we've tasted locally, while a certain fish stew we tasted had *buko* as one of the main ingredients.

However, when we were served *ensalada* with the main course, we dis-

SLIDING down the zip line

Nature's new girl

From pa

A second later, I found myself on top of a table shrieking hysterically. The chickens seemed to have multiplied by the dozens and they were everywhere! I thought I was safe on top of the table, but I forgot that chickens could fly.

With a flap of its wings, I found myself face-to-face with the ugliest beak I'd ever seen. I screamed and begged Bianca to get it away from me. I was near tears, but everyone else thought I was going insane over the stray dogs and the noisy swine.

I obviously lost my appetite. Instead, I counted to three and bolted—right into the river! I detested water, but for the first time in my life, I had christened it my sanctuary. I was officially safe from those bloody chickens.

MACAHAMBUS
ADVENTURE
AT MACAHAMBUS Adventure Park

INSIDE the Macahambus cave

THE CAVE'S pristine waters

SKY bridge

THE AUTHOR (seated, third from right) with the rest of the CDO group at Panagatan

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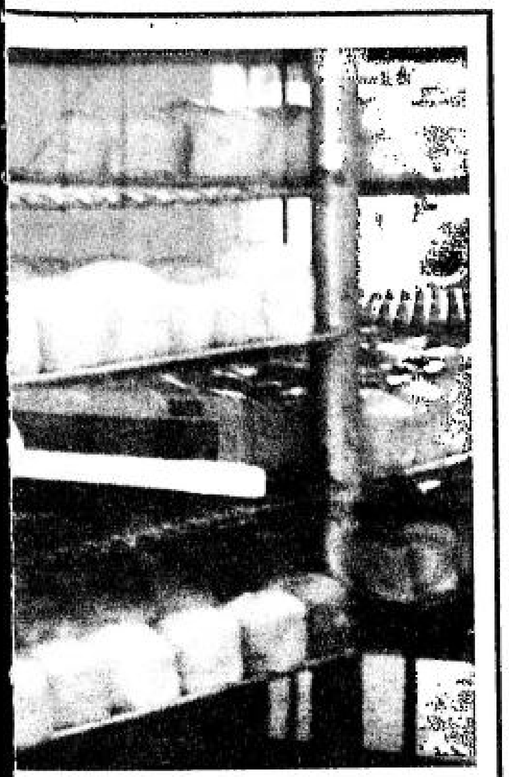

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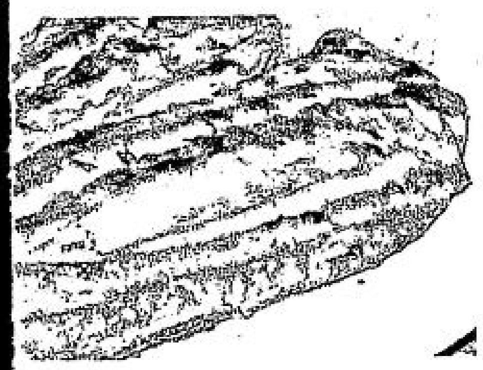

a belly

yummy

covered it had slightly different ingredients. The dish had the usual tomatoes and onions, but no green mangoes or *bagoong*.

"*Dito sa Mindanao, 'di uso ang* green mango," we were told.

While sour tastes such as that of the green mango may not be in vogue in Cagayan de Oro, sweets are definitely a favorite.

Pastel, the soft, buttery dinner rolls filled with *yema*, are sold all around the city as a popular *pasalubong* item, along with sweet pineapple-cured ham (which tastes like honey-baked ham.)

While the region's dishes may not have Bicol's fiery impact or Pampanga's varied flavors, the food in Cagayan de Oro has its own distinct signature—one spiced with ginger and sweetened by fruit.

Email biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

We continued to paddle and during the long stretch of stillness, jumped off the raft and just floated on our life vests—the "body float," as they called it.

Before we knew it, we were already approaching the 14th rapid. Time had never gone by so fast, especially when doing something I never thought I would actually enjoy. I received a text message from my friend Ryan which read, "It's good for you to step outside your comfort zone once in a while. You might surprise yourself you know, either by discovering that you actually like it a little." Well surprise, surprise. I certainly did not fall apart mid-activity. But I am pretty glad I gave Mother Nature a second chance.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com

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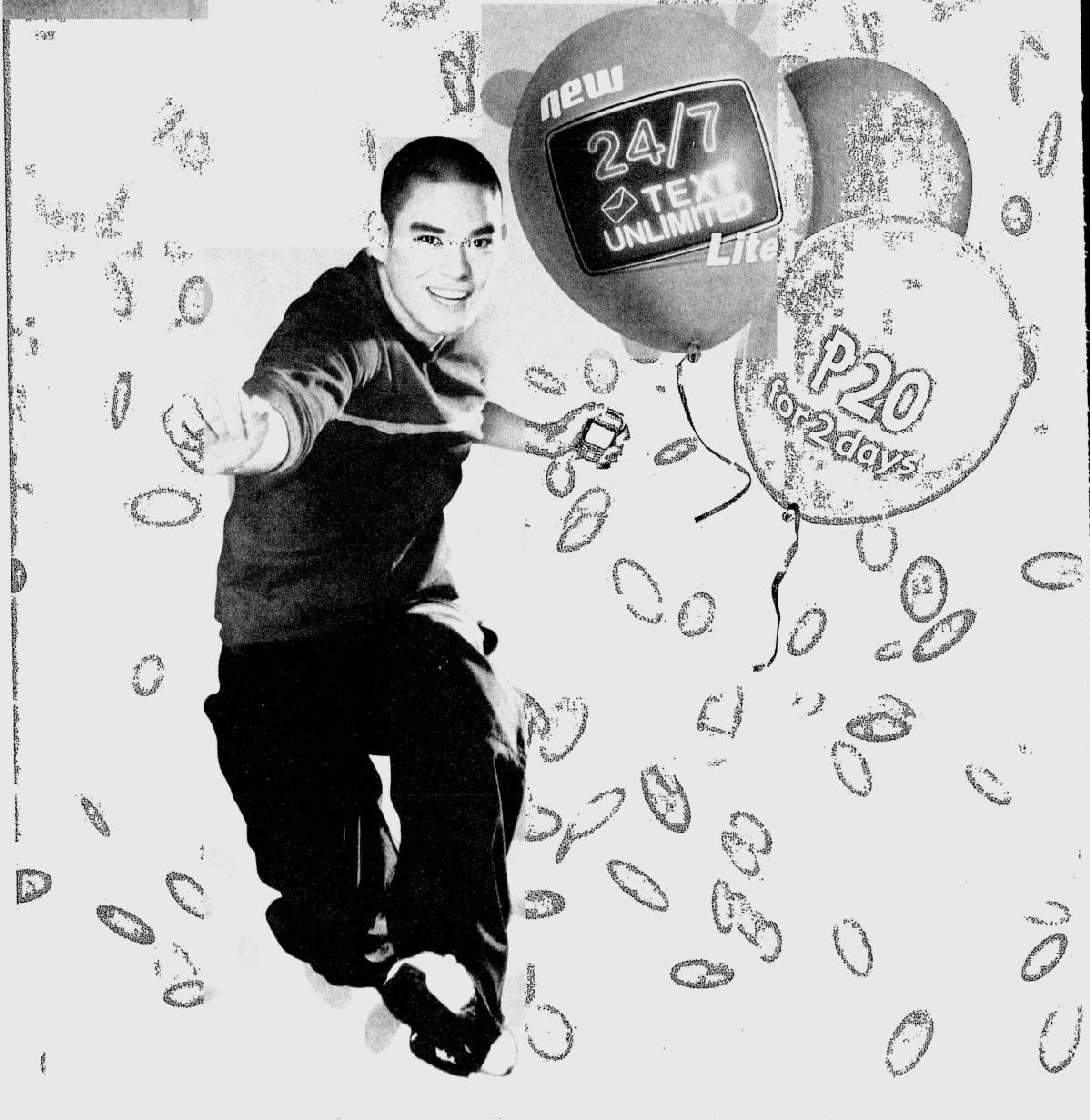

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ONLY in Vigan

Viva Vigan!

By Tammy David
2bUI Correspondent

Who would've thought going to a living museum would be so much fun?

WHEN Pam, the chief, asked me if I wanted to go to Vigan for the weekend while half of the city flocked to the Bs (Batangas-Boracay-Bohol), I immediately replied "Yes!" without knowing what was in store for me.

Of course, being a perennially absentminded elementary student, I was only familiar with the *longganisa* and the old town, which is a favorite location for commercials and period soaps.

So together with correspondent Marla Miniano, we endured the long car ride to check out Viva! Vigan!, the town's annual celebration of its unique culture and heritage.

"This was our idea of making Vigan a tourist destination not only in the North but internationally," says Dennis Rivas of the Vigan Tourism Council. Indeed, it was a festival worth the six-to-eight-hour travel time from Manila.

There was a crafts and plants fair where orchids and Vigan's products were sold. An art exhibit at the City hall entitled "Lines Across Time" showcased works from students of the University of Northern Philippines. And the Abel Iloko Fashion Show at Plaza Burgos featured the sons and daughters of Vigan families strutting their stuff in Abel garments.

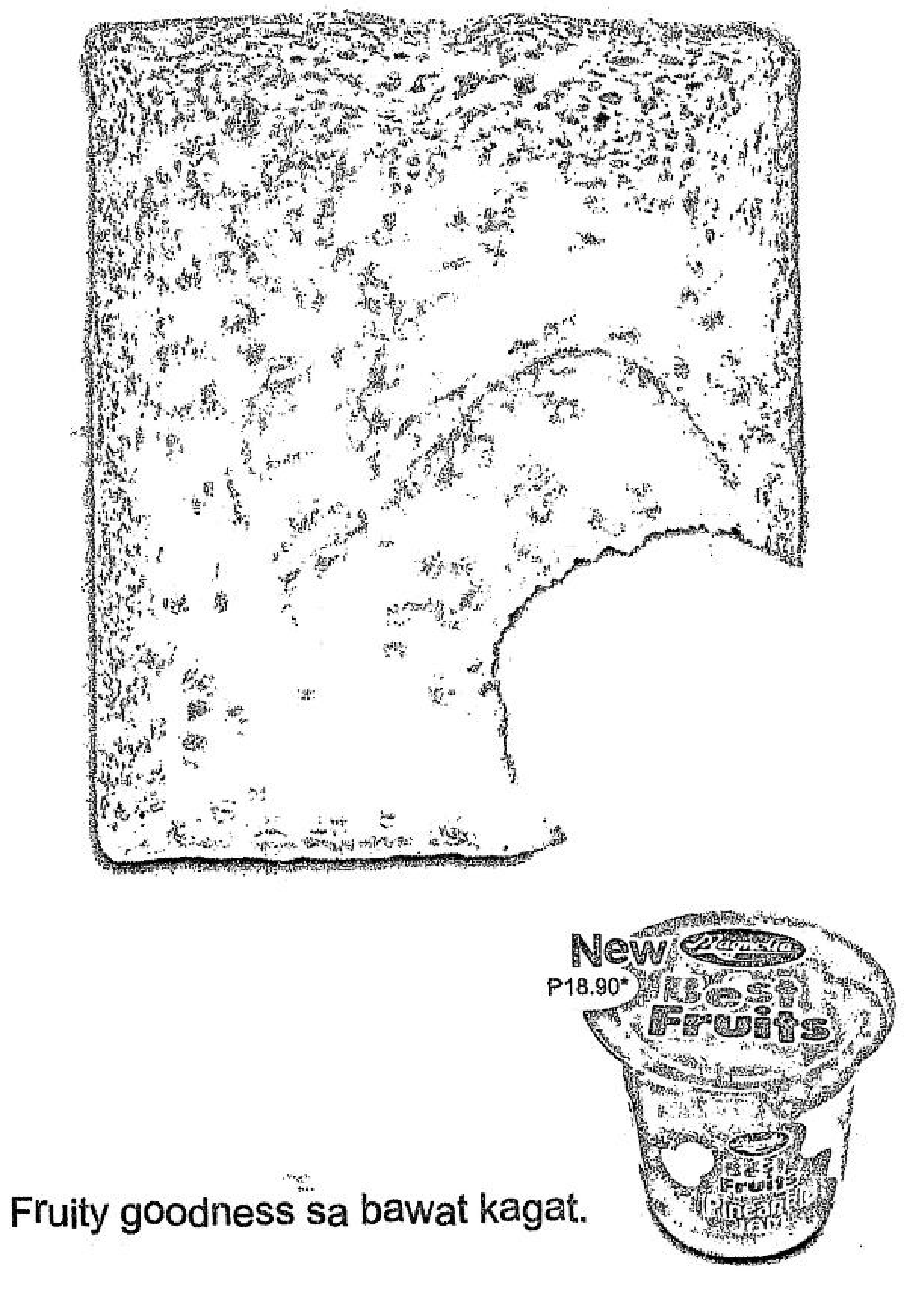
But the highlight of the trip was the Binatbatan Streetdancing Competition. Various schools and groups from all over the region entertained the townsfolk and tourists with their colorful costumes and dance exhibitions inspired by the age-old tradition of Pagbababatbat (separating seeds from the cotton).

So why should you visit Vigan? Let me count five reasons:

1. Heritage Village Unesco since 1999

Dubbed as the "Living Museum," this old

VIVA/ F2



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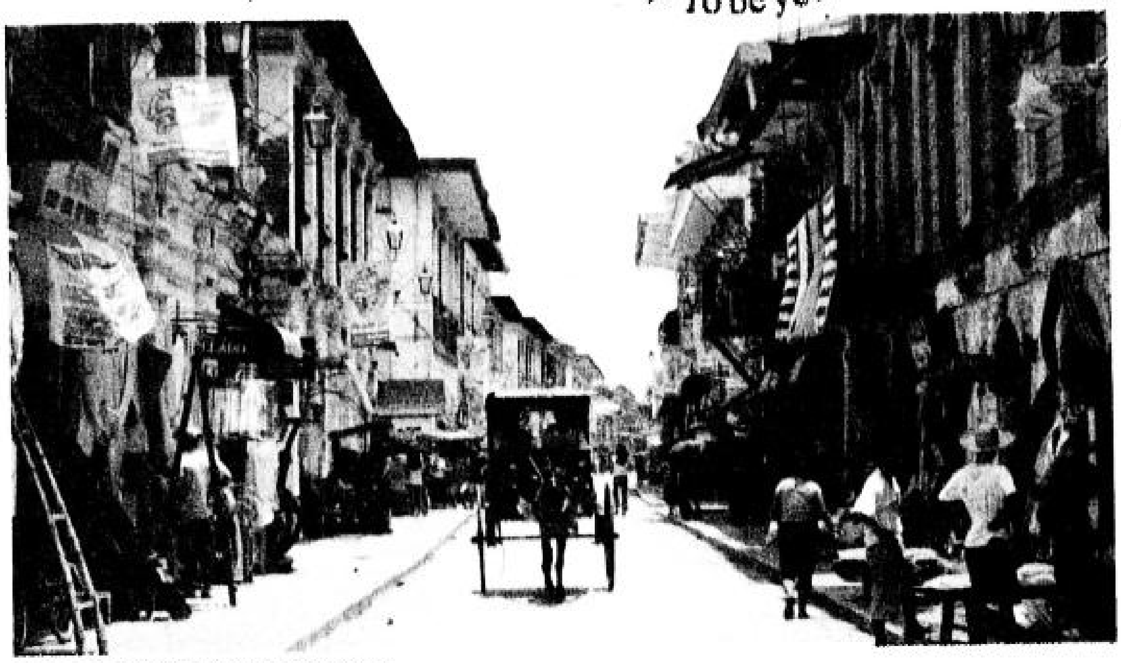
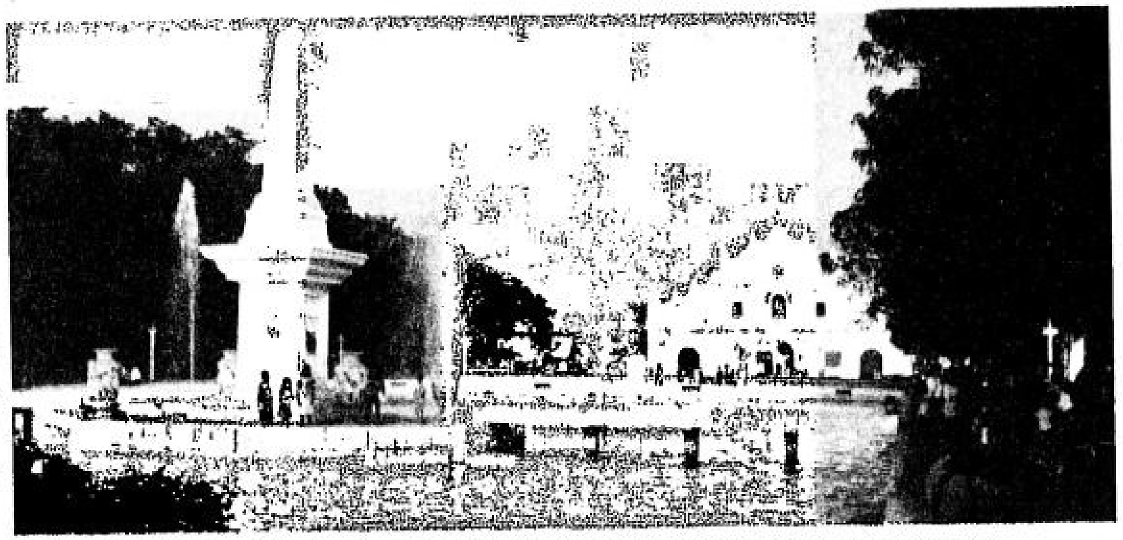
Top 5 destinations



WORLD-FAMOUS Calle Crisologo

A MONUMENT to poetess Leona Florentino, a daughter of Vigan

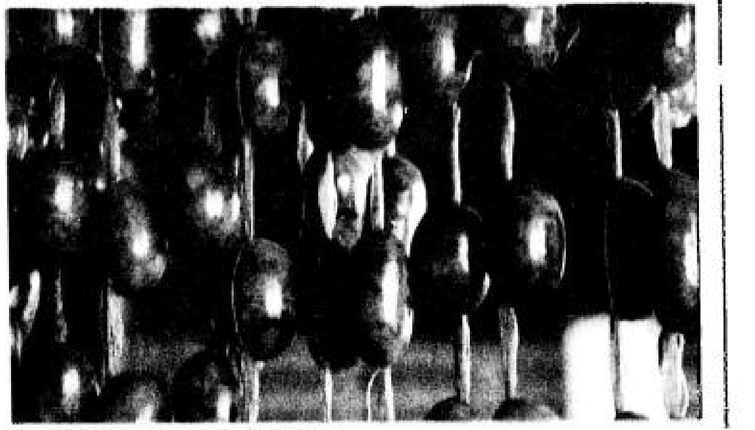
FRIENDLY reminder from the cleanest city in the region



THE HISTORIC Plaza Salcedo where Gabriela Silang was executed by public hanging in 1763.

HI-PROTEIN heaven. A scene from the Vigan Market

Top 5 specialities

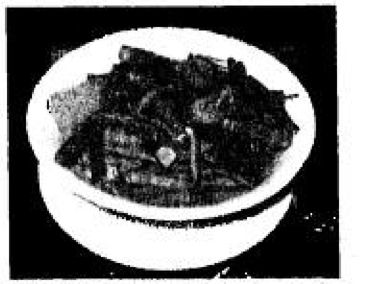


LONGGANISA, P80 per dozen

BAGNET, P130 for half-kilo

NATIVE halo-halo, P45 at Café Leona, Calle Crisologo

BETTER than lattes: Tsokolate de Vigan, P35 at Café Bigaa, Vigan Plaza Hotel



YUMMY veggies. Café Leona's Pinakbet, P85

AT THE HERITAGE Site Marker with Bigueños Vice Mayor Franz Ranches and Mayor Ferdinand Medina

Viva Vigan!

From page F1

town with its preserved architecture will take you back in time to the Spanish colonial era.

2. Binatbatan Festival

Why take a plane to Aklan or Bacolod when you can go up North for an equally lively and colorful festival?

3. Karbo Festival

This is a *carabao* show with the country's favorite animal colorfully painted or dressed and paraded around the town.

4. Semana Santa at St. Paul Cathedral

Holy week in this place is the perfect time to get in touch with your spiritual roots, while at the same time appreciating the magnificent Baroque church.

5. Vigan is the cleanest and greenest city in Region 1 by the Gawad Pangulo sa Kapaligiran!

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E-mail the author at tammydavid@gmail.com

PARTICIPANTS in the street dancing portion of the Binatbatan Festival of the Arts

Fashion hunting in the North

Text by Marla Miniano
Photos by Tammy David

WHENEVER I hear the word Vigan, visions of demure young ladies in Maria Clara outfits start floating around in my head.

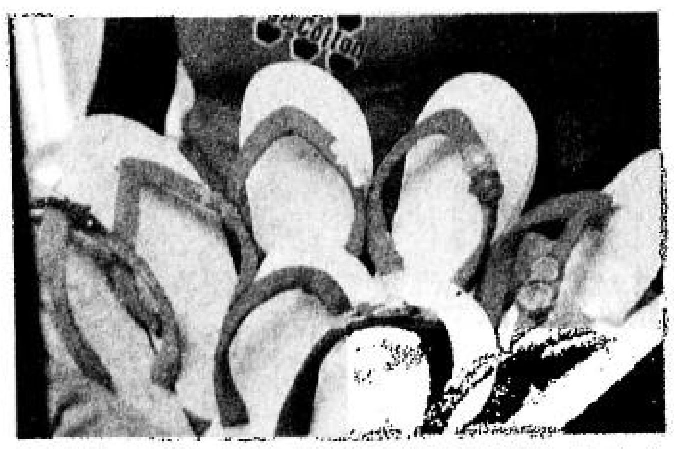
The moment we arrived in the city, I wanted to don a *baro't saya* and have my picture taken looking out of those antique windows.

And yes, it sounds silly, but honestly, I was disappointed when I wasn't greeted by women walking down the street in *dalagang* Filipina attire.

I shrugged off the disappointment and started looking around. It turned out Vigan had more than a few fashion surprises in store for me.

SHAWLS (P100) come in cool shades like mint green, bubble gum pink, and sunny yellow. They also have clean white and basic black for those who prefer the classic look.

BEADED necklaces (P50) are the ideal pasalubong for all your gal pals back home! MARLA MINIANO



FLIPFLOPS in various colors at the Crafts and Plants Festival. Created by Sheila Medina, these *tsinelas* sell for P150 a pair. E-mail tsinelas_bysheilamedina@yahoo.com

OUTFITS featured in the Abel Iloko Fashion Show. Abel is a special kind of fabric proudly woven by Ilokanos.

STRAW bags (P180)

THESE native bags (P200) are perfect for the beach.

ON THE WAY back to the main banca at mid-sea

Around Masbate in one day

From page F4

uncooperative. It is hoped that Masbateños, will realize what treasure they have in their midst and work hand in hand to preserve it.

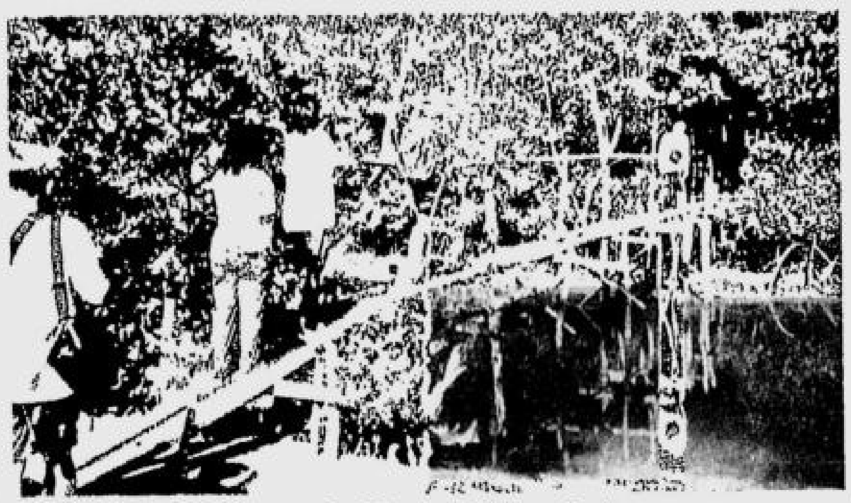
But that's not all. We passed a number of caves on the boat trip to San Miguel. They would have been breathtaking if not for the painted names of several politicians (from the most recent elections).

I wondered how environmental groups try to convince politicians not to vandalize natural structures.

The next stop was the San Miguel Lighthouse. When our boat hit the shore, we were greeted by a tiny community of people who lived in the island. There must have been just 10 families there; and with the bed of purple seaweeds being dried out on the rocks, it was easy to figure out that it was what they lived on, besides fishing, of course.

Steep

The steps leading up to the lighthouse were too steep for our under-exercised bodies, but the local mountaineering group, Sakag, was there to aid us in our tortuous trek upward. We literally crawled our way up the 270 something steps, stopping every three or four steps to catch our breaths; so you can just imagine how long it took for us to finally enjoy the fantastic view of nearly all of the waters and islands surrounding Masbate.



INTO the mouth of Bongsanglay Mangrove Nature Park

The journey down, surprisingly, did not seem as difficult (probably because the image remained vivid in our minds), though we did have to inch ourselves slowly as we neared level ground. All our treading, hiking, climbing and panting were rewarded by a bounteous feast with the freshest of seafoods at Halea Island, all courtesy of Monreal Mayor Ben G. Espiloy.

Though satisfied, even exhilarated, from the trip, we had to admit our energies were spent at the end of the day. We were all joking on the trip back, looking forward to hitting the sack back at Rendezvous, when our guides realized that our gas tank was leaking.

Yes. At around 7 p.m., with the port about a mile away, we got stranded with an empty tank.

Surprisingly, nobody cracked and everyone stayed calm. Finally, at around 8:15 p.m., we saw the lights. Masbate Mayor Socrates Tuazon had sent help. We were saved.

That day around Masbate ranks as one of the Top 10 unforgettable moments in my life. I was treated to an island experience I had never had before. I definitely will be back.

CELEBRATING Masbate's favorite farm animal

VANESSA ARELLANO DOCTOR

Home on the range

BELIEVE it or not, we have cowboys in this country.

On September 2, 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 120, declaring Masbate as the Rodeo Capital of the Philippines, in recognition of the province's primary source of livelihood, cattle farming, and in support of the region's growing tourism industry.

Groups, young and old, from different parts of the Philippines and the world come to this annual event showcasing novel forms of cattle ranching and raising, and take part in the various handling competitions.

The categories include cattle wrestling, lasso-throwing on foot, casting down, the two-person carambola, load carrying, bull whipping, bull riding and lasso-throwing on horseback. There is also an impressive parade of cowboy-inspired floats and the infamous one-cow-participating Best Cow contest (dressed and fully made-up).

There are more jaw-dropping sights to see. Girls looking frail and unable to open a bottle of mineral water were chasing the rather aggressive cows around the quadrangle, holding them by the ear and pinning them to the ground.

Animal cruelty? Members of the Rodeo Masbateño Foundation (RMF) are quick to explain that the purpose of these events is to show and teach participants and spectators the proper techniques of handling cattle.

It is a wonder how Masbateños have taken to ranching when 81 percent of the province is covered by mountain ranges and rolling hills. Charge it to the ingenuity of its people, who saw the pasture lands around these natural structures as opportunities, not hindrances.

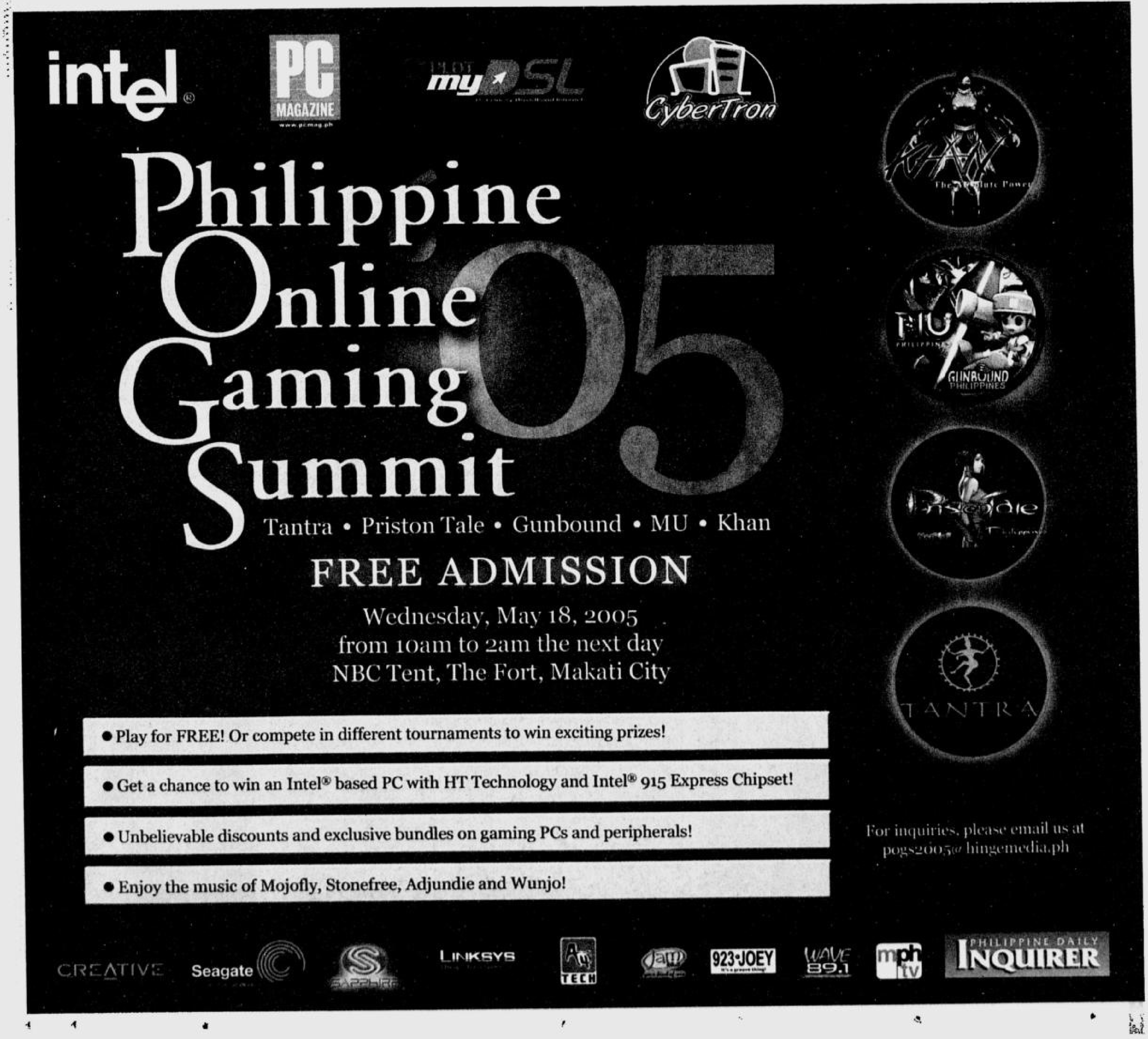
Since the RMF started holding Rodeo Masbateño events in 1993, the province's tourism figures have risen gradually. Now, not only do cattle raisers benefit from the event, local consumer services operators are also profiting greatly from the surge of visitors. What was originally an activity to celebrate the province's specialty has given birth to a robust season for many new businesses and jobs.

Rodeo Masbateño's popularity has reached as far the National Rodeo Finals in Las Vegas and the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association of America, earning it the title "Rodeo Capital of Asia."

With the huge and still growing interest in this annual activity, Bicol's director for Tourism Nini Ravanilla finally spearheaded the creation of a Department of Tourism-accredited travel package that not only allows Masbate to open up its ranches, but also its pristine topography.

Yes, Masbate is surrounded by several white-sand islands that can hold a candle to the now-commercialized Boracay.

Give it a couple of years more, and there's no doubt Masbate will soon become a formidable threat to some of the country's most popular tourist destinations. If I were you, I'd go there now while the accommodations are still cheap. *Vanessa Arellano Doctor, 2bU! Correspondent*



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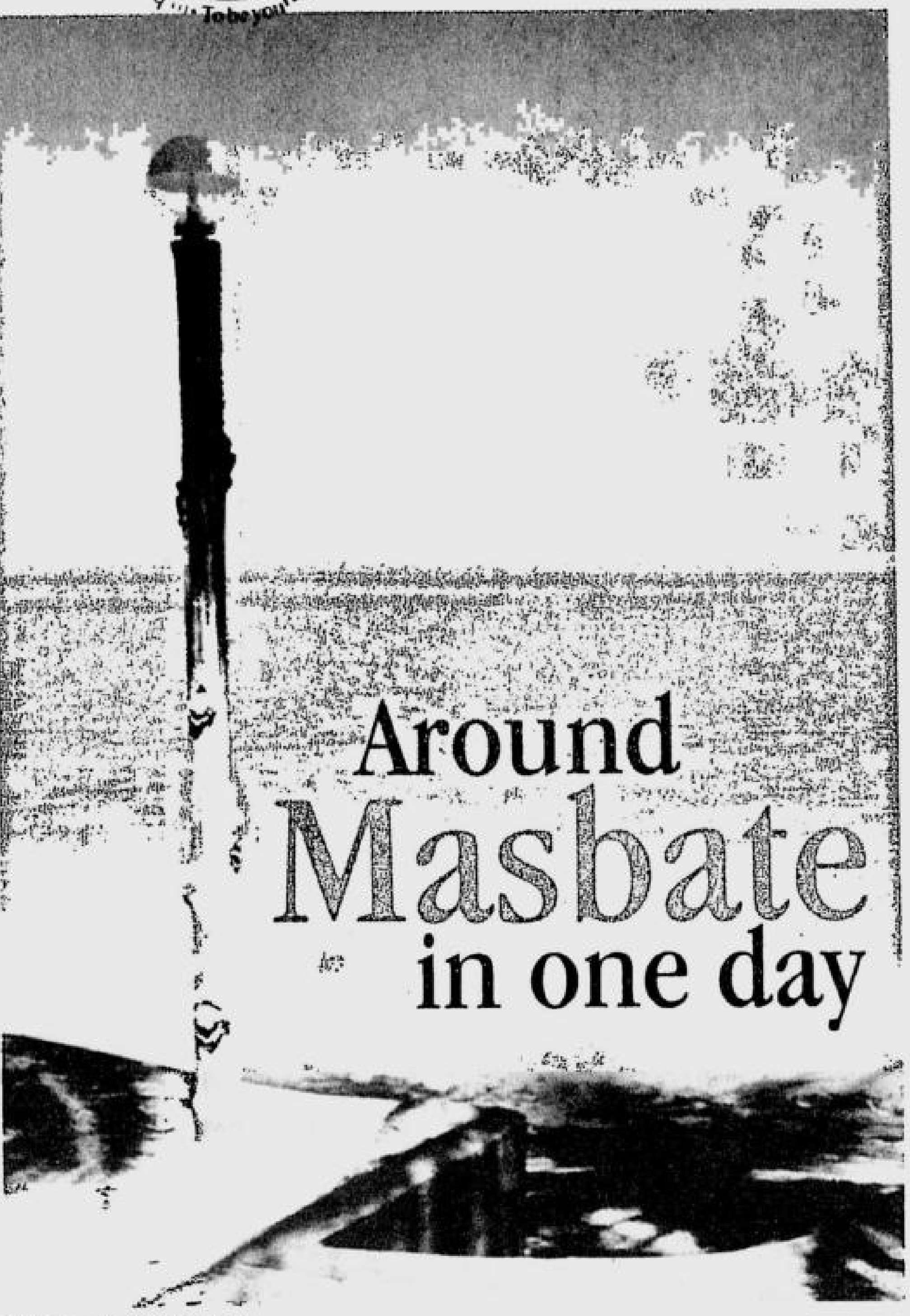

Around Masbate in one day

COOL waters of Bontod

By Vanessa Arellano Doctor
2bUI Correspondent

NOT MANY know this, but Masbate holds some of the most pristine, unexplored beaches in the Philippines—with crystal blue and green waters and the finest of white sand that could put some of the country's more popular beaches to shame. (We were fortunate to have Rendezvous Resort owner Cokie Medina along, who graciously offered bits of information as we toured the islands.)

The main attraction is Ticao Island, where the towns of Batuan, San Fernando, San Jacinto and Monreal, among others, are located.

As we circled, we could see huge limestone hills and vast expanses of white coasts. If we did not have just one day to go island-hopping, we would have jumped in and cooled ourselves.

The heat was sweltering; but the view and the fact that the beaches were in no way commercialized, tempered our irritation and had us staring, jaw open, at the place's untapped virginal state.

BONGSANGLAY Mangrove Park

We stopped at the Bongsanglay Mangrove Park for a chance to witness the site's largest mangrove tree—the Piapi. Because it was mid-afternoon and the tide was too low for our boat to make it to shore, we had to walk thigh-deep in seawater, carefully avoiding the mangrove seedlings that were being grown.

Most of us were lucky to have worn shorts that day. I was in jeans. Too curious to see what Bongsanglay held within, I plunged in, trying to forget that I would be walking around with wet jeans for the rest of the day.

Worth my sand

The trip was worth all that sand in my heavy pants. Surveying the site, one would clearly see how Masbateños value nature. Medina educated us on the province's drive to preserve the mangroves, even bothering to set up elevated planks to avoid having visitors step on their roots and breathing tubes (*nomatopores*).

The trek into and out of the Mangrove Park took about an hour. We would have wanted to stay longer and enjoy the breeze, but we had more islands to tour.

But, before that, we dropped by the town of San Jacinto to visit Mayor Aris Espinoza and discuss another of Masbate's greatest wealths—the manta rays. The province's coastal resource management program, particularly the care for the manta rays, is being primarily put forward by San Jacinto, since the so-called Manta Bowl falls directly under its jurisdiction.

Espinoza says it's difficult to protect the manta because some municipal officials are

AROUND/F3

COKIE Medina and the Piapi—the largest mangrove tree in the Bicol region.

Unwanted Hair Nightmares?
Make Your Hair-Free Dreams Come True!

If you think you've been battling with unwanted hair for the longest time...then it's time you win the battle for good and wake up to satin-smooth, hair-free skin!

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Now you can do whatever you want and wear just about anything (even the sexiest clothes and skimpiest swimsuits) without worrying about unwanted hair peeking out from unexpected places.

LaserLight is so quick and effective (treatment time for your underarms is as quick as 5 minutes!) many satisfied clients are now enjoying their soft, silky-smooth, hair-free skin. One of them, former actress turned restaurateur Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez says, "I'm happy – very happy. I really recommend LaserLight because it's for life. You know, if you think about it...you'd be waxing for life, shaving for life...in the end you'd be spending the same thing! But this one's already for life, so it saves time and everything. Plus the results: *makinis...maganda...maputi*. It's really worth it."

Popular disc jockey Delamar couldn't agree more: "With cold wax (which I used to remove my underarm hair before), I only get 5 days of hair-free underarms. After that, the hair starts growing back and I'm in trouble again. The time in-between waxing sessions is the worst. I couldn't wear sleeveless because I had to let the hair grow so I can wax it again. Luckily, with LaserLight, I don't have to go through all that. Now I proudly flaunt my underarms anytime."

Makeup Artist Barbi Chan recounts her own story: "I was obsessed with getting rid of my underarm hair. Waxing, plucking, threading...name it, I've done it. But they can't keep the hair gone for long and they even made my underarms dark, sometimes greenish in color. It really freaked me out! I used creams and different products to lighten my underarms but to no avail. That's why I was more than happy when I had LaserLight Hair Removal. It didn't only get rid of my unwanted hair for good – it also whitened my underarms! Now, even total strangers at the gym approach me and ask what I did to have such soft, white, hair-free underarms. They would even ask if they could take a closer look. I just raise my arms and proudly announce – I had LaserLight!"

"It didn't only get rid of my unwanted hair for good – it also whitened my underarms!" Barbi Chan
"LaserLight is definitely 100% effective." Isay Alvarez

"I'm happy – very happy. I really recommend LaserLight because it's for life."

"Now I proudly flaunt my underarms anytime."

LaserLight is truly the only treatment that gave these women complete satisfaction. As Actress/Singer Isay Alvarez says, "LaserLight is definitely 100% effective. For us actors, it's really one of the greatest things to come along."

It's never too late or too early to avail of LaserLight Hair Removal. And now that Facial Care Centre is offering it at a very affordable **25% DISCOUNT**, you can really make your hair-free dream come true!

For a FREE consultation, call the Facial Care Centre professionals at **892-SKIN.**

Barbi Chan

Isay Alvarez

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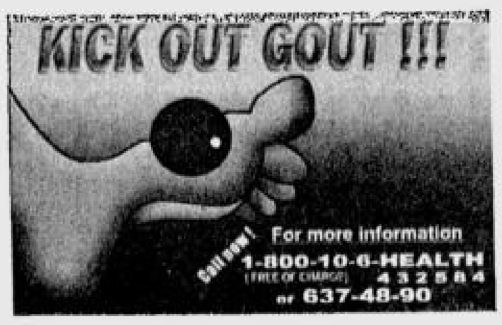
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GARIMON Roferos

The Davao chronicles

My trip back to durian country renewed my love affair with nature, culture and durian coffee

DAVAOEÑO kids perform a native dance for the resort guests.

Text and photos by Angela V. Ignacio
2bUI Correspondent

I came, I saw and I gorged myself silly on native dishes. This was the summary of my first visit to Davao. Almost three years later, I found myself back in durian country, but little did I know I was in for something different.

Two words: culture shock. But in a good way, of course.

Day 1: Reintroduction

The cleanliness of the city was a most welcome sight, and my lungs were ecstatic that the no-smoking policy was firmly implemented everywhere in the city.

May is National Heritage Month, and its formal launch was held in Davao. Entitled "Mindanao Heritage Rediscovered," this kick-off celebration was born out of the partnership of the government and the private sector to promote the rich heritage of the South.

All events were to be held in Davao's most renowned landmarks, and we members of the press were about to attend a series of exhibits and tours around the city.

Baby Montemayor, chairperson of the Southern Philippines Tourism Council, greeted us with a welcome lunch before we hied off to our first venue. The Davao City Hall, the oldest building in the city, was the sight of the event's formal opening, which featured, among others, native songs and interpretative dances.

By this time, People Asia writer and fellow shopaholic Diorella Tan and I were itching to hit Aldevinco Shopping Center, conveniently located beside our hotel. We practically flew to the complex right after the event, gleefully pouncing on the dizzying array of gorgeous woven cloths and funky wooden accessories before it closed for the day

With stomachs growling and wallets visibly dented, we had dinner at the Oriental Buffet Palace, where the buffet costs just a little P200. Our tour guides said buffet prices here in Davao were really cheap, as well as pomelo (P350 a crate) and tuna (P150 a kilo was already expensive).

Day 2: Rediscovery

First stop on our official itinerary was the beautiful Apo View Hotel, the oldest in Davao, for the opening of the Mindanao Trade Expo.

There, Davao's finest antiques and handicrafts were displayed and sold, including

THE DAVAO/ G2

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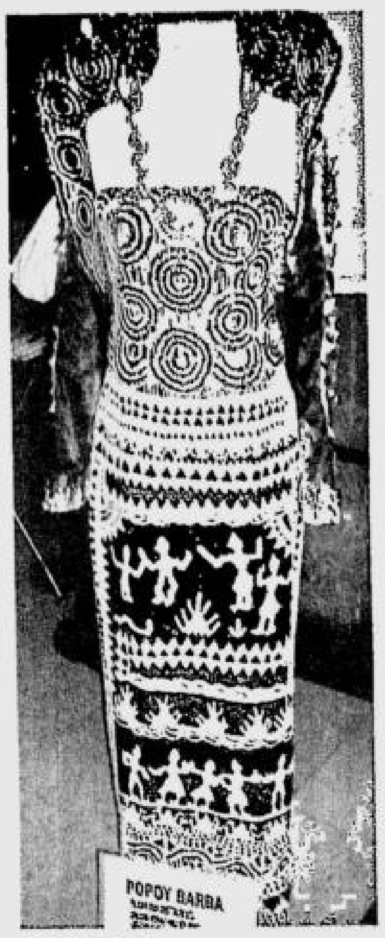
ORNATE *bauls* **and other antiques are for sale at the trade exhibit.**

EXHIBIT facade

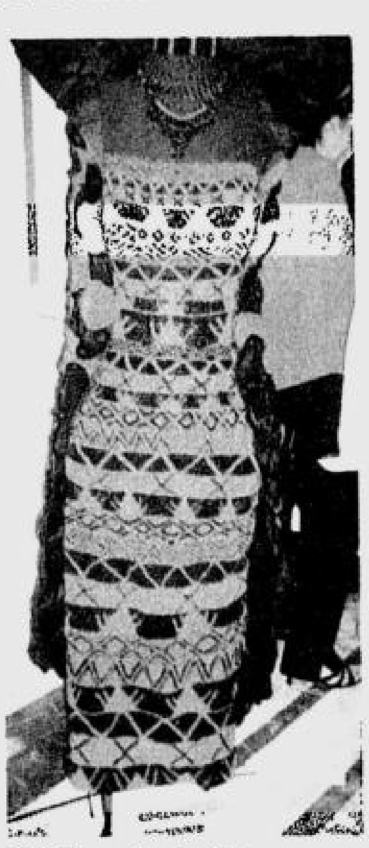
BEADED finery

EDEN'S art shop sells works made entirely of epoxy, by brilliant local artist Obet Acyatan

The Davao chronicles



POPOY Barba



EMI Alexander Englis

From page G1

works by talented sculptor/artist Ann Pamintuan.

Looking around, I was amazed to discover that everything was made by hand, from the inlaid mother-of-pearl studs on a carabao horn bangle down to the intricate beadwork on a single piece of cloth.

Next, we went back to our hotel for the Balik Lantaw photo exhibit (Balik lantaw means "looking back"), a compilation of decades-old photos from the Davao Museum and private collections.

Ever the addicts, Diorella and I decided to forego our afternoon naps and sneak off to Aldevinco again. Our frenzied buying paid off later, as our newly-bought wooden bling-blings completed our native fashionista look for the fashion/performance art show scheduled that night.

Directed by choreographer Agnes Locsin, the event was a unique showcase of ethnic brilliance and ingenuity, complete with interpretative dances and a performance by folk music guru Joey Ayala. Davao's best designers, with "fashion czar" Alfonso "Boy" Guino-o leading the pack, worked their magic on indigenous materials and came up with fabulous creations portraying wind, water and earth elements.

By now, my senses were thoroughly soaked with arts and culture, but I still had one more goal to accomplish. I wheedled the others into stopping by the famous Blugré coffee shop for its Durian Gatchpuccino and a hefty slice of Chocolate Torte with cream topping. Yummy!

Day 3: Reawakening

Today was tour day, and we were able to visit a couple of great tourist spots before our night flight back to Manila.

Malagos Garden Resort is a 12-hectare sanctuary for birds and butterflies. It was a beautiful venue, with works by Napoleon Abueva lighting up the place. We stayed for the weekly bird show, where eagles casually swooped down just above our heads and a parrot played one-on-one basketball with its trainer.

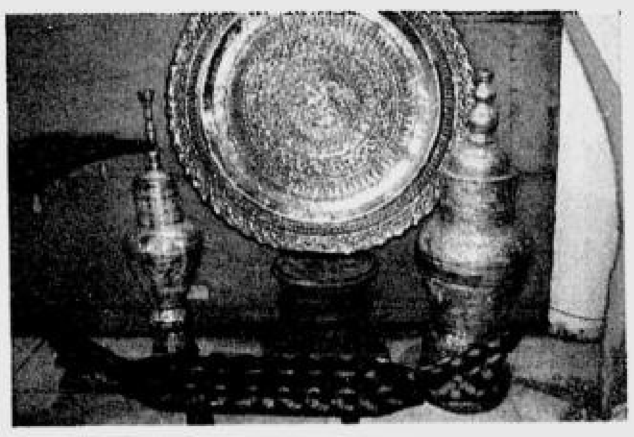
After that, we hied off to Eden Nature Park and Resort, which really does live up to its name. Owned by Atty. Jesus Ayala, Eden is a sprawling 80-hectare resort built on the slopes of Mt. Talomo.

With forest-like structures and giant trees, it's hard to believe that 95 percent of it is actually man-made. Eden Fields opened to the public last March, and it's perfect for sports camps, conventions and company outings. Hidden cottages and cabins are scattered everywhere for retreats and even honeymoon trips.

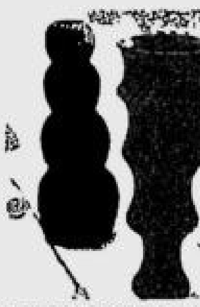
Special thanks to the Department of Tourism, The National Commission for Culture & the Arts, Filipino Heritage Festival, Inc., Southern Philippines Tourism Council, and Philippine Airlines.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@atenista.net.

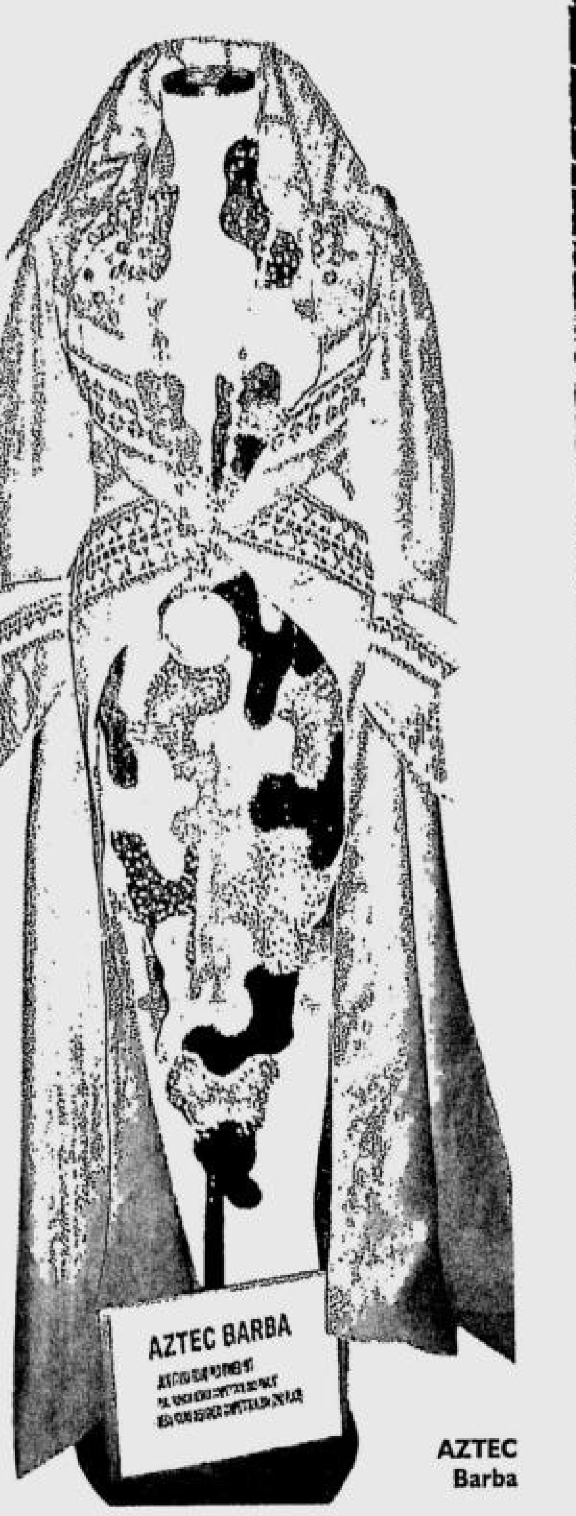
ORGANIZERS, TAKE A BOW! DOT representative Edu Jarque; NCCA executive director Cecile Guidote Alvarez; Mita Rufino, president of Filipino Heritage Festival; Baby Montemayor, SPTC chair; Ann Pamintuan, Trade Exhibit head; and Margie Floirendo, SPACE Foundation chair



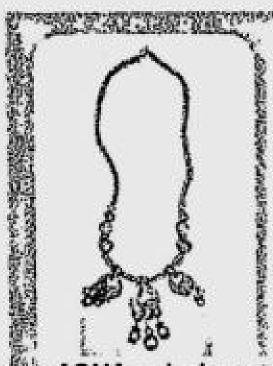
MORE antiques



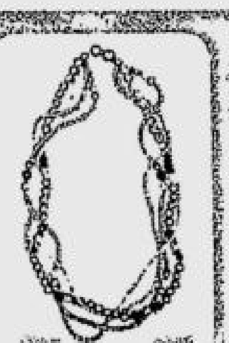
INTERESTINGLY-shaped vases



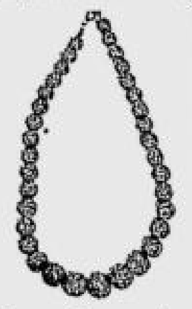
AZTEC Barba



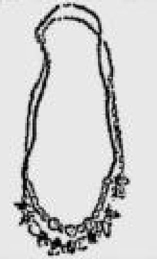
AQUA and salmon necklace, P80



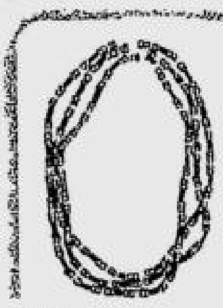
CITRUS coral beads, P80



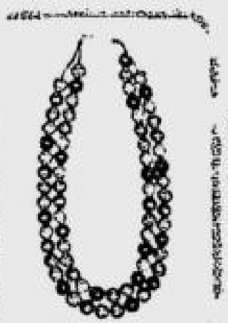
Turquoise coral beads, P100



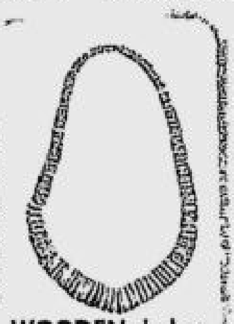
SINGLE-STRAND wooden necklaces in green and pink, P80 each



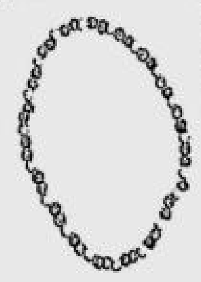
Thin-strand necklaces, P20 each



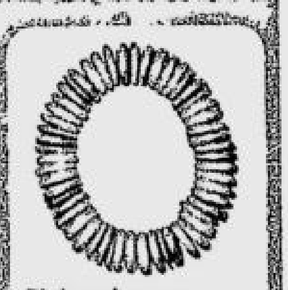
Double-strand coral necklace, P100



WOODEN choker in beige, P60



"Jelly" beads, P50



Pink and green "Smarties" bracelet, P20

Baubles, bangles and beads

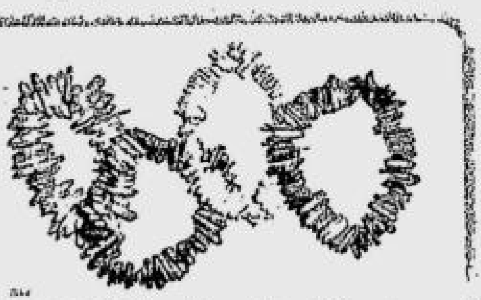
Text and photos by Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

WOODEN beads and bright coral pieces are the hottest accessories this season, and Boracay's not the only place where to find them.

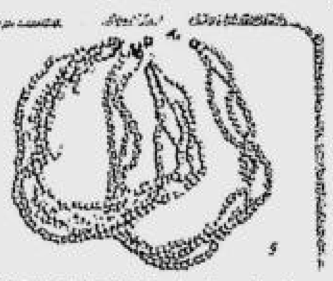
Right smack in the heart of Davao City is Aldevinco Shopping Center, a row of shops housing some of the most gorgeous bead bracelets, earrings and multi-strand necklaces you'd ever find.

Most items are one of a kind. In some stores, you can even choose the type and color of beads and have them custom-made for you, if you have the time. Tip: don't be afraid to get dirty and rummage among the slightly dusty bins, and always try to haggle down to half the price. More often than not, they'll give it to you.

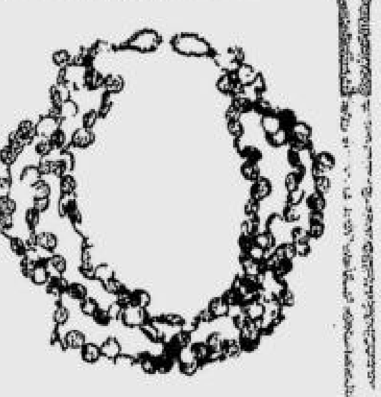
E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@atenista.net.



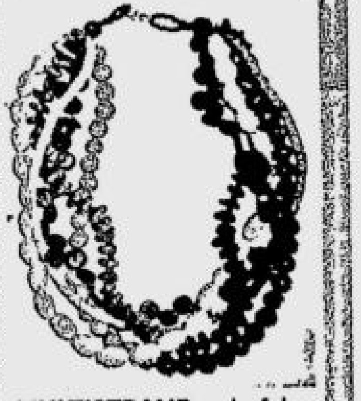
WOODEN shard bracelets, P20 each



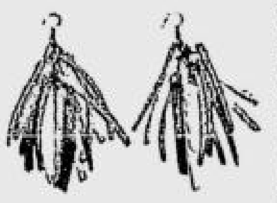
MULTI-STRAND chokers in lime green and beige, P100 each



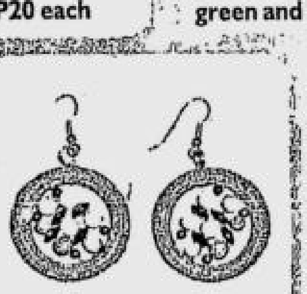
Wooden brown choker, P100



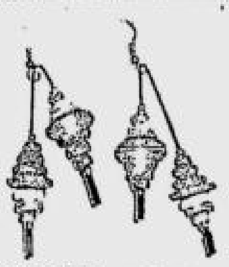
MULTISTRAND, colorful necklace



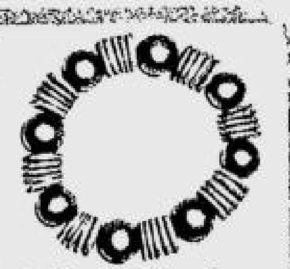
LARGE chandelier earrings, P90



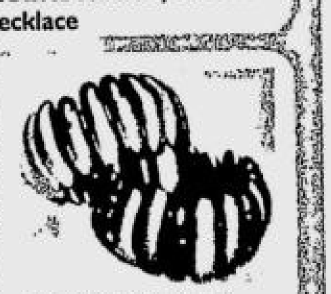
CIRCLE earrings



DUMBBELL earrings



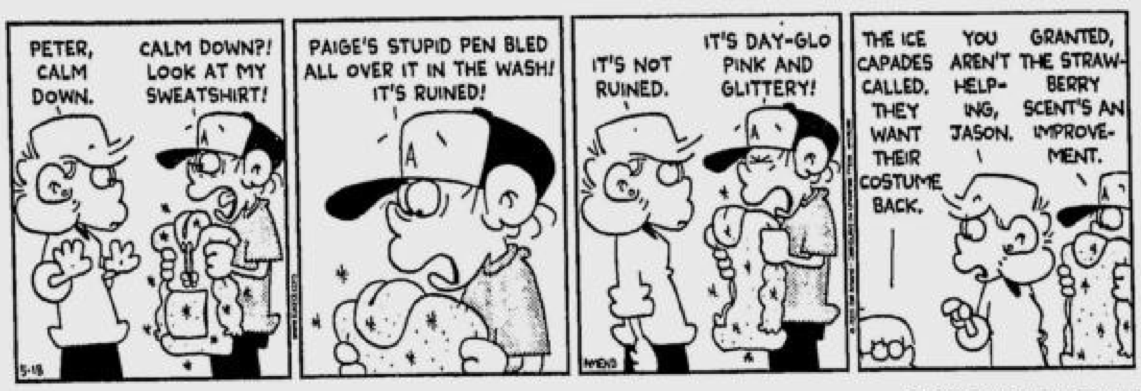
Gold-painted bead bracelet, P20



Heavy gold-painted bangles, P100 each

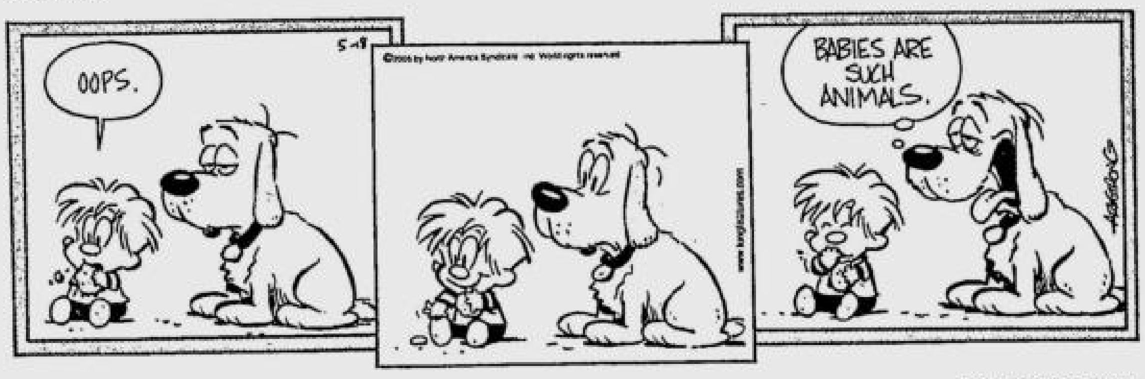
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


PETER, CALM DOWN.
CALM DOWN?! LOOK AT MY SWEATSHIRT!
PAIGE'S STUPID PEN BLED ALL OVER IT IN THE WASH! IT'S RUINED!
IT'S NOT RUINED.
IT'S DAY-GLO PINK AND GLITTERY!
THE ICE CAPADES CALLED. THEY WANT THEIR COSTUME BACK.
YOU AREN'T HELPING, JASON.
GRANTED, THE STRAWBERRY SCENT'S AN IMPROVEMENT.
5-18

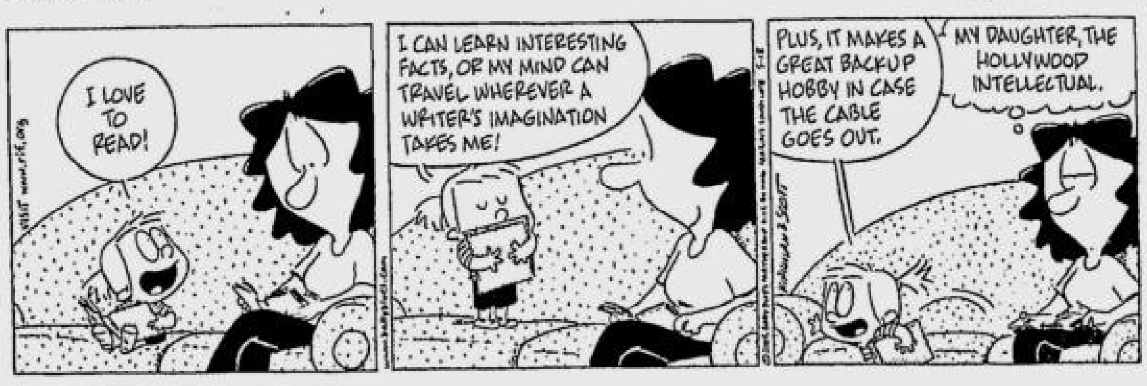
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


OOPS.
BABIES ARE SUCH ANIMALS.
5-18

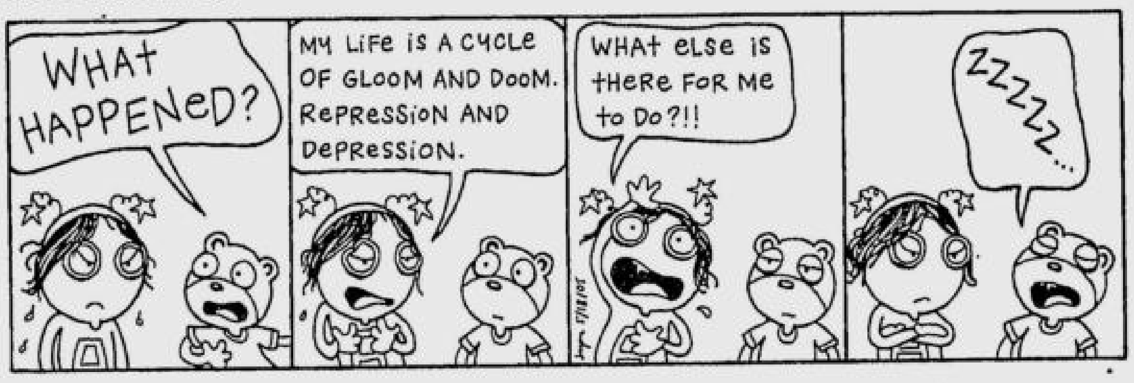
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I LOVE TO READ!
I CAN LEARN INTERESTING FACTS, OR MY MIND CAN TRAVEL WHEREVER A WRITER'S IMAGINATION TAKES ME!
PLUS, IT MAKES A GREAT BACKUP HOBBY IN CASE THE CABLE GOES OUT.
MY DAUGHTER, THE HOLLYWOOD INTELLECTUAL.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT HAPPENED?
MY LIFE IS A CYCLE OF GLOOM AND DOOM. REPRESSION AND DEPRESSION.
WHAT ELSE IS THERE FOR ME TO DO?!!
ZZZZZ...

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a committed idealist. You are both traditional and liberal: You want to improve society. You will always speak out against injustice. Although imaginative, you are also very practical. You value clear logic, and others see you as the voice of reason. Enormous change takes place for you this year. (This means change for the better.) Birthdate of: Pope John Paul II; George Strait, country singer; Chow Yun-Fat, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might learn interesting gossip about a neighbor or relative today. Take extra care when driving; this is a mildly accident-prone day.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): It's hard to control your finances today. You might lose money, or you might find money. One thing is certain: You have bright moneymaking ideas!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Expect the unexpected. You feel restless, rebellious and full of nervous energy. You want something new and different to happen in your life. (Don't push things when talking to the boss.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): A real character might enter your life today. Keep an open mind, because this person could become a new friend. This individual is either bizarre and eccentric or from a different background from yours.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your daily routine will be interrupted today. This could be anything from a fire alarm to a computer crash or a power failure. People are a bit jumpy. (Patience.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Unexpected news from afar surprises you today. Possibly somebody from a different culture crosses your path in an unusual way. You feel rebellious with a boss (best not to show it).

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Surprising things can happen at work today, but they might help you. Unexpected resources are suddenly unavailable. Research yields answers to old questions or problems.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): A partner or close friend will shock you today. Or perhaps you'll hear surprising news about this person. Don't jump the gun. Wait until you hear the whole story.

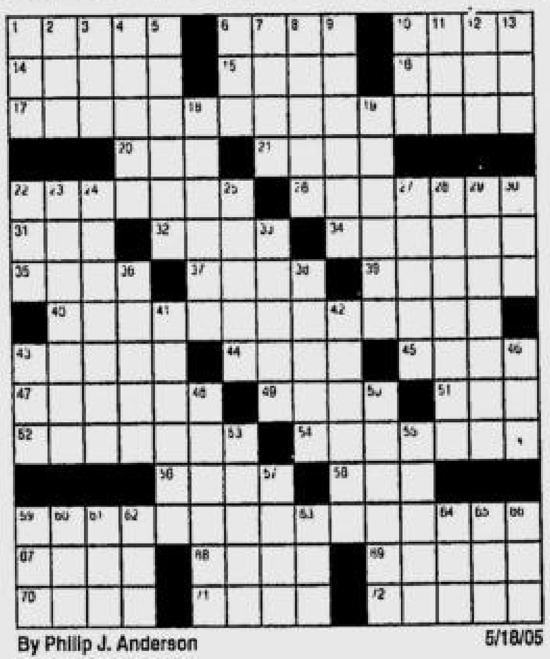
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Interruptions to your daily routine at work are likely today. (Anything can happen.) The good news is, you're highly inventive and imaginative right now. You're full of original ideas!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): New romance might stir your heart today (eyes across a crowded room and all that). This is the stuff of movies! Exciting flirtations come from the most unexpected sources!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're restless and rebellious today. You're full of electrical energy. This could make you impatient with family members. (Resist this temptation.) Instead, look for exciting amusements and entertaining escapes.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might blurt out something today without thinking. Be careful. Your mouth is working faster than your mind. (Or is it the other way around?)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
5/18/05

ACROSS
1 Mil. mess
6 Adroit
10 Wine stopper
14 Piped instrument
15 Fulda feeder
16 Nabisco cookie
17 New Mexican taprooms?
20 Six in Siena
21 Adjutant
22 Runs of luck
26 Signified
31 Haggard novel
32 Turner or Louise
34 Leon lady
35 TV units
37 Writer Ogden
39 Island in the Cyclades
40 Lounge lizards' hangouts?
43 Word before oil or mouth
44 Mother of Clytemnestra
45 Hammer target
47 Subtle meaning
49 Software support
51 Obtained
52 City on the Loire
54 Allowance
56 Backside
58 Neighbor of Mont.
59 Nineteenth hole?
67 Actual
68 Will of 'The Waltons'
69 Customary
70 Fighting force
71 Belgian battle site
72 Pitched abodes

DOWN
1 ASPCA part
2 FDR's Blue Eagle
3 Farming: pref.
4 Mistaken
5 Upset an incumbent
6 Crime-busters' grp.
7 Icelandic epic
8 Reeking
9 Exchanges
10 Olympic runner Sebastian
11 Former Bruin Bobby
12 Stimpy's buddy
13 Boxer's stat
18 Skimpy swimsuit
19 Via ___ (Rome thoroughfare)
22 Sound of a puncture
23 Top of a clock
24 Add up again
25 Tangle
27 Vidalia veggie
28 Cargo weight
29 Geographical shaper
30 The German
33 Selling feature
36 Boulder
38 Land of the dead
41 Jockey on five Derby winners
42 Of milk
43 6 on the phone
46 Inc. in Liverpool
48 Power
50 Went underground
53 Cloys
55 Hesitate
57 Syngman of Korea
59 Lingerie purchase
60 Gas: pref.
61 Hit head-on
62 Trout lure
63 Misspeak
64 Take flight
65 Fri. follower
66 Golfer Ernie

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

A	B	E	L	■	P	A	T	T	I	■	A	M	P	S
T	A	X	I	■	A	D	O	R	N	■	P	E	A	L
E	R	I	N	■	R	U	N	E	S	■	O	N	L	Y
■	S	T	I	C	K	L	I	K	E	G	L	U	E	■
■	■	■	M	A	S	T	■	■	T	E	L	■	■	■
A	B	L	E	R	■	S	A	D	■	T	O	O	T	H
L	E	A	N	T	O	■	C	U	E	■	■	S	E	A
P	A	S	T	E	I	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R
H	U	T	■	■	L	E	O	■	O	R	I	E	N	T
A	S	S	A	Y	■	F	R	E	■	A	M	A	S	S
■	■	■	L	O	S	■	■	V	E	T	O	■	■	■
■	G	U	M	U	P	T	H	E	W	O	R	K	S	■
A	L	S	O	■	I	R	E	N	E	■	O	A	T	S
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P	E	S	T	■	S	E	N	D	S	■	S	E	R	E

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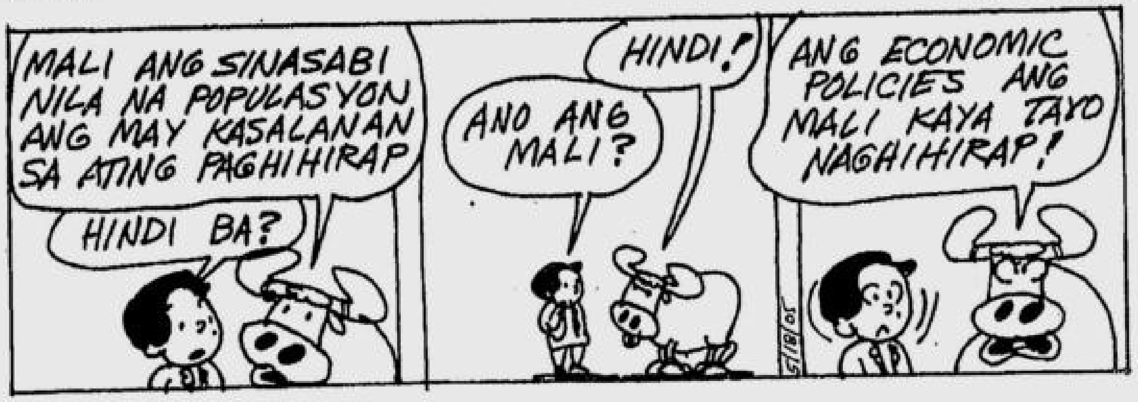
5/18/05

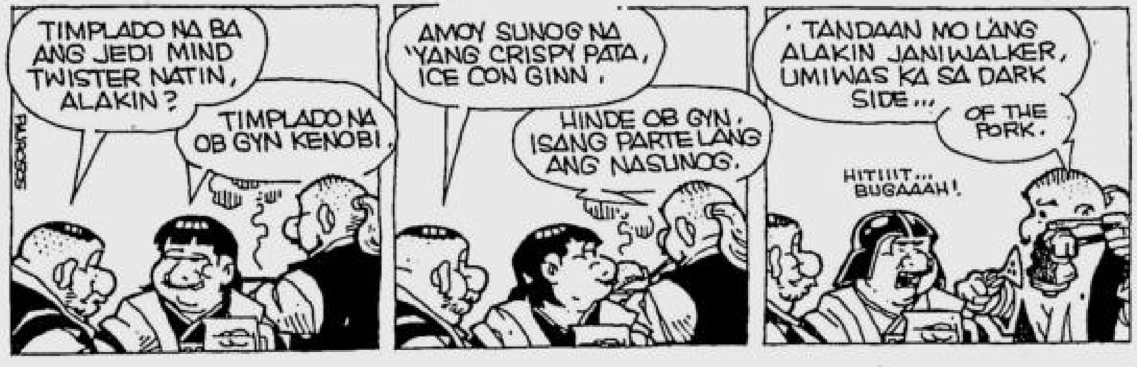
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MALI ANG SINASABI NILA NA POPULASYON ANG MAY KASALANAN SA ATING PAGHIHIRAP
HINDI BA?
ANO ANG MALI?
HINDI!
ANG ECONOMIC POLICIES ANG MALI KAYA TAYO NAGHIHIRAP!
5/18/05

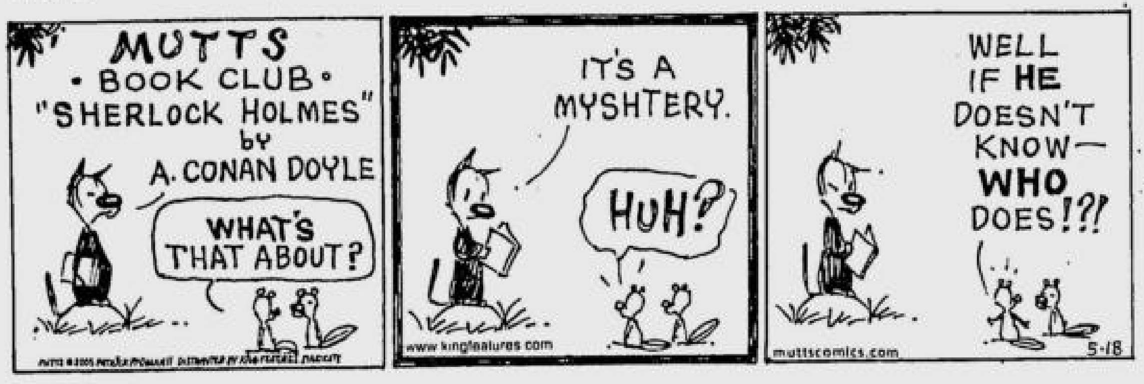
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIMPLADO NA BA ANG JEDI MIND TWISTER NATIN, ALAKIN?
TIMPLADO NA OB GYN KENOBI.
AMOY SUNOG NA 'YANG CRISPY PATA, ICE CON GINN.
HINDE OB GYN. ISANG PARTE LANG ANG NASUNOG.
TANDAAN MO LANG ALAKIN JANIWALKER, UMIWAS KA SA DARK SIDE...
OF THE PORK.
HITIIIT... BUGAAAH!

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MUTTS • BOOK CLUB • "SHERLOCK HOLMES" by A. CONAN DOYLE
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?
IT'S A MYSHTERY.
HUH?
WELL IF HE DOESN'T KNOW— WHO DOES!?!
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
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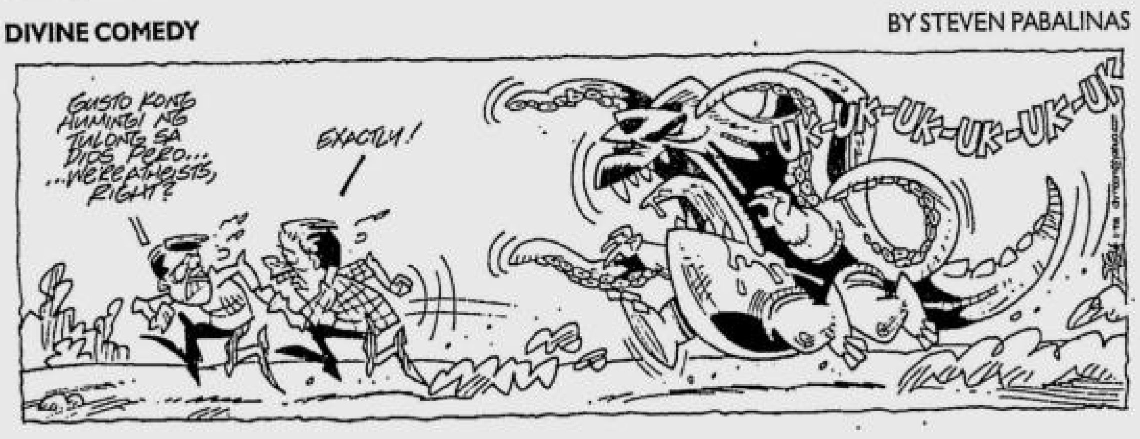
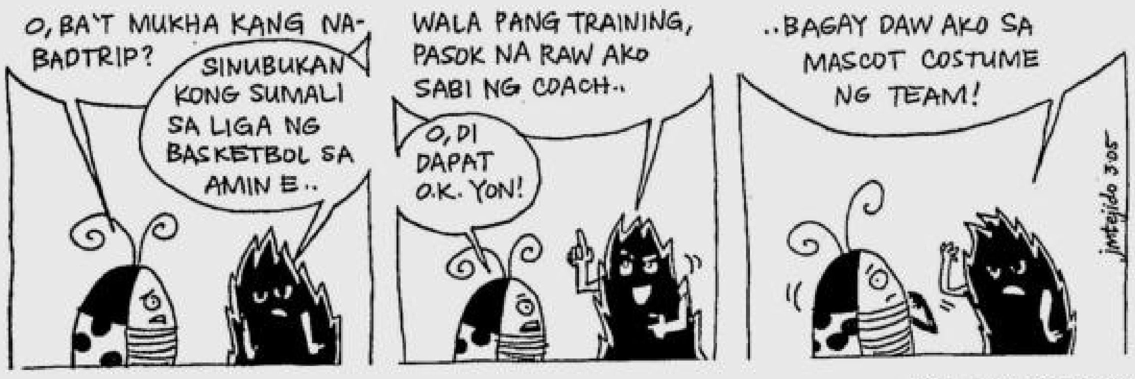
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


GUSTO KONG HUMINGI NG TULONG SA DIOS PERO... ...WE'RE ATHEISTS, RIGHT?
EXACTLY!
UK-UK-UK-UK-UK-UK

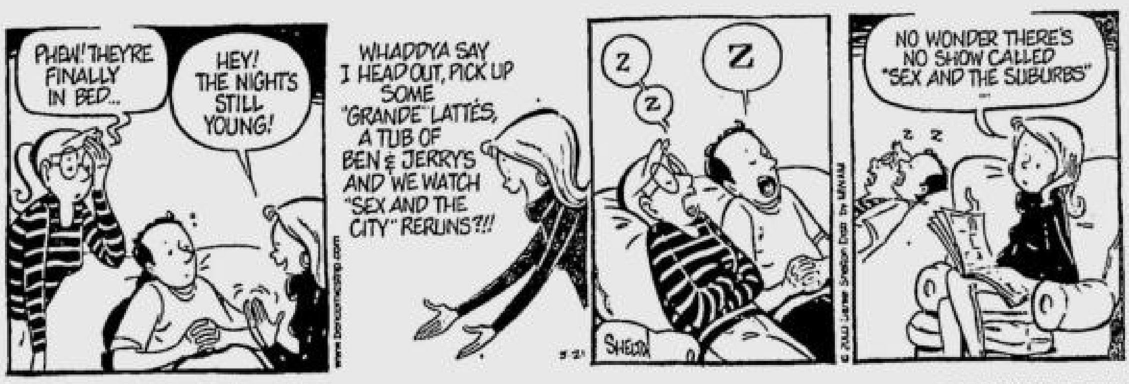
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


O, BA'T MUKHA KANG NABADTRIP?
SINUBUKAN KONG SUMALI SA LIGA NG BASKETBOL SA AMIN E..
WALA PANG TRAINING, PASOK NA RAW AKO SABI NG COACH..
O, DI DAPAT O.K. YON!
..BAGAY DAW AKO SA MASCOT COSTUME NG TEAM!
jmtejido 3.05

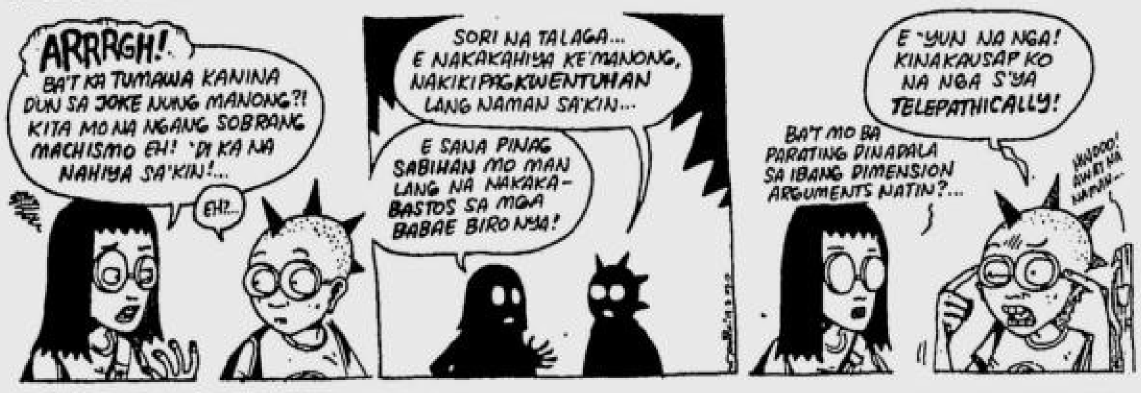
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


PHEW! THEY'RE FINALLY IN BED...
HEY! THE NIGHTS STILL YOUNG!
WHADDYA SAY I HEAD OUT, PICK UP SOME "GRANDE" LATTES, A TUB OF BEN & JERRY'S AND WE WATCH "SEX AND THE CITY" RERUNS?!!
Z
Z
Z
NO WONDER THERE'S NO SHOW CALLED "SEX AND THE SUBURBS"

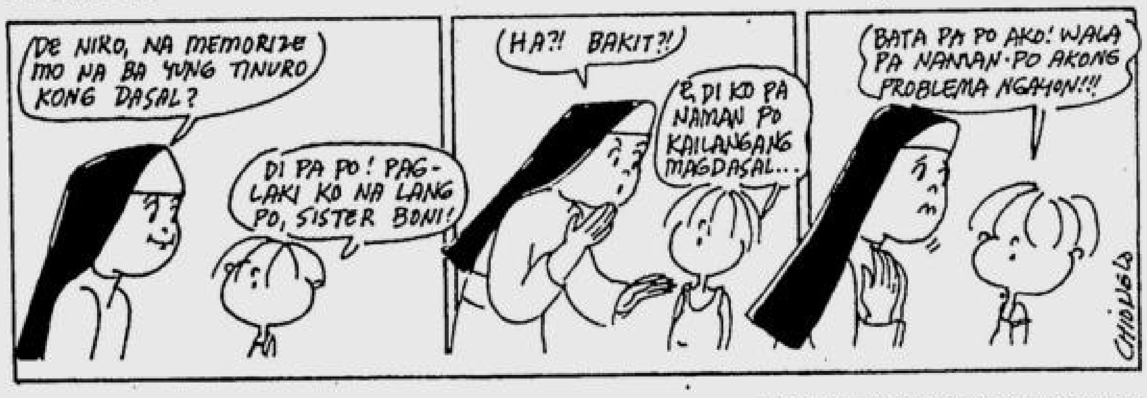
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ARRRGH! BA'T KA TUMAWA KANINA DUN SA JOKE NUNG MANONG?! KITA MO NA NGANG SOBRANG MACHISMO EH! 'DI KA NA NAHIYA SA'KIN!...
EH?..
SORI NA TALAGA... E NAKAKAHIYA KE MANONG, NAKIKIPAGKWENTUHAN LANG NAMAN SA'KIN...
E SANA PINAG SABIHAN MO MAN LANG NA NAKAKABASTOS SA MGA BABAE BIRO NYA!
E 'YUN NA NGA! KINAKAUSAP KO NA NGA S'YA TELEPATHICALLY!
BA'T MO BA PARATING DINADALA SA IBANG DIMENSION ARGUMENTS NATIN?...

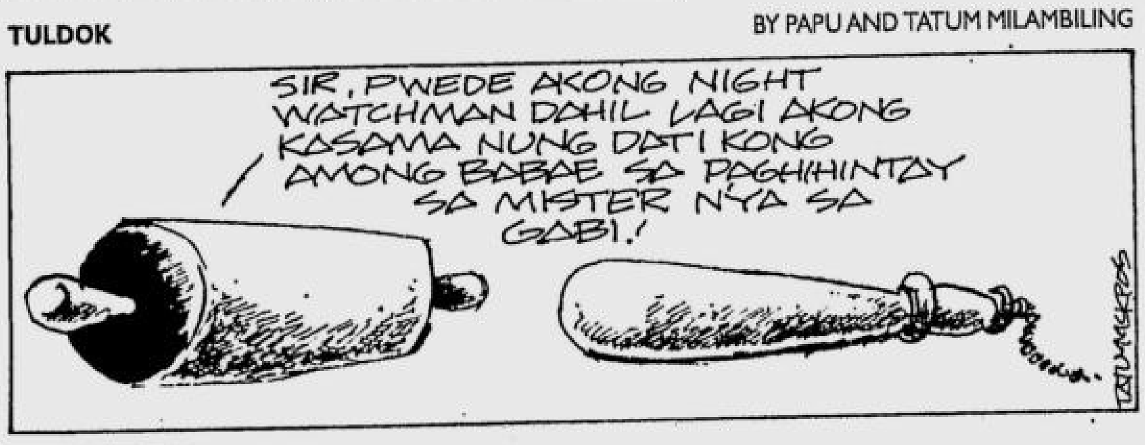
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIKO, NA MEMORIZE MO NA BA YUNG TINURO KONG DASAL?
DI PA PO! PAGLAKI KO NA LANG PO, SISTER BONI!
HA?! BAKIT?!
E, DI KO PA NAMAN PO KAILANGANG MAGDASAL...
BATA PA PO AKO! WALA PA NAMAN PO AKONG PROBLEMA NGAYON!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SIR, PWEDE AKONG NIGHT WATCHMAN DAHIL LAGI AKONG KASAMA NUNG DATI KONG AMONG BABAE SA PAGHIHINTAY SA MISTER NYA SA GABI!
TATUMAKROS

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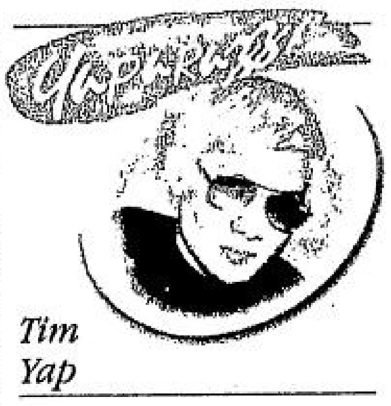
I'll tumble for ya, Boy George!



Tim Yap

I MISSED **Boy George's** NBC Tent gig the other week so when I got the invite from sassy sisters **Mimi** and **Juliet Tan** to have dinner with him (or her), I grabbed the chance to catch up with the boy I grew up with.

I was briefed before the dinner at Sala. "Do not ask him anything about the '80s, and wear something flamboyant—maybe he'll like that," they told me.

But I didn't want to upstage him, so I chose to be minimalist that night. I heard that he wasn't in the best of moods the past few days since "heat is the enemy of drag," and Manila is at its hottest (his makeup was melting) this time of the year.

Of course, "Karma Chameleon" was playing in my head as I rushed to Sala (which, according to host and owner **Colin Mackay**, is moving to Makati soon).

The restaurant was full when I arrived, with Boy George and posse fully comfortable within Sala's confines. I sat right in front of Boy George and started my subtle interrogation.

Soundtrack: "Do You Really Want to Hurt Me?"

The last time I got starstruck was when **Sharon Cuneta** sat beside me to eat a giant burger at the now defunct Stars. I grew up with Sharon and Boy George, but after meeting and greeting local and international stars, I must admit I do not get starstruck anymore.

Not that I have gotten jaded, but I realize that hey, they are people, too.

Scared of David Bowie

In between deep conversation about Boy George's life and times, some dinner mates would interrupt us and have their photos taken with him.

He seemed quite used to this, making funny faces as each one took a snapshot.

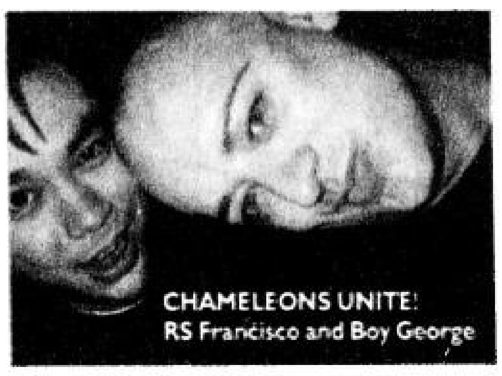
I asked him if there was ever a time when the situation went on reverse, when it was *he* who wanted someone's photo.

"It hasn't happened. I wanted to have a photo with **David Bowie**, but I was too scared to ask. I get too scared with people I like," said Boy George, sans makeup, but with a star of David tattoo etched on his scalp.

While the whole table consisting of industry insiders were starstruck with Boy George's presence, we learned that **Mark Vedo**, the British DJ (who became the instant crush of many peeps that night) hadn't even known who Boy George was until they worked together.

I guess the difference between us and Mark is that as kids, we were all glued to the TV and radio—that was all we had back then.

Our connection to Western pop culture was **Casey Kasem**. British and American kids played football, soccer and baseball, but we stayed home and watched "Saturday Fun Machine."



CHAMELEONS UNITE! RS Francisco and Boy George

He was part of our wonder years in the '80s, so we were not about to let him leave Manila fuming mad about the hot weather. In the end, he left happy like his songs we grew up with

We talked extensively about Boy George's Broadway career with "Taboo" the musical, where he played legendary party scene icon Leigh Bowery. It was nominated for four Tony awards, but didn't win any. The best actor award went to **Hugh Jackman** for "Boy from Oz," about the life story of **Peter Allen**, the gay husband of **Liza Minelli** who eventually died of AIDS.

Hugh Jackman gay?

It was a funny twist because all of a sudden we started talking about Liza and Hugh (okay, first name basis—we're close). "I remember the time when I was partying at this sleazy haunt called Orange (in London, not the former Makati Ave club) and they told me that Liza was there. It was like 10 in the morning, and she was overdosing on crack! How cliche and campy—Liza on crack!" Boy George let out a slight chuckle.

"And her new husband **David Gest!**" Boy George added. "I'm quite sure he's a transexual. Look at his photos—he doesn't have an Adam's apple. Oh well, how can you be with Liza and not be gay?"

He seemed to enjoy the topic, so he went on.

"And you know who else? Hugh Jackman is so gay. I just saw him at a benefit the night before the Tony's and I saw him holding hands and kissing his lover! The nerve to go onstage during the awards to say he is not," as he raised an eyebrow, lit a cigarette, and proceeded to go for a bathroom break—a break that took about 10 minutes, with his whole posse.

Cecile Zamora was too cute as she just stared at George from across the table, speechless. **Hindy Weber-Tantoco** looked like she was melting, as she wanted to bring out some vintage paraphernalia (from **Pepper Teehankee's** collection), but was instructed not to do so.

RS Francisco shared that he used to get scolded in school because he was wearing makeup a la Boy George. They shared makeup tips that night as well.

In between bites, we also discussed his crossover to the fashion design field with B Rude, a line he shares with **Mike Nichols**, the guy he has been collaborating with since Culture Club days. It's a full line of jeans and t-shirts with graphic designs of naked men embellished, sprayed and deconstructed on fabric.

Boy George told me about his New York show which debuted the same time as NY Fashion week and invited me to his show this September. I am definitely not going to miss that one.

Party people, not fans

Regarding the party at the NBC Tent, Boy George said, "Next time, the promoters should get party people, not fans," he said.

Background music: "War War Stupid."

But what happened was really inevitable whenever it would be Boy George behind the turn table. The first time I went to a Boy George gig was in Ibiza, and even there, the partyphiles were staring at him more than they were dancing.

Piped in music: "Mistake Number 3."

In New York, Boy George can walk around without being noticed, he said, again, in between 10-minute bathroom breaks.

"Fame is only good when it's new," he said. "So in my private life, I don't wear costume and makeup. I like it that I am not recognized."

In between sips of wine, he seemed to enjoy our company. "My outlook on this country has changed tremendously after meeting you guys tonight," he looked at us, smiling. Thank you, thank you. (DOT, here I come.)

Whew. We didn't want our '80s icon to leave Manila with battle scars, didn't we? So why were we not allowed to ask anything about the era of shoulder pads and high hair?

"I don't care about the '80s," Boy George said. "Let's live in 2005."

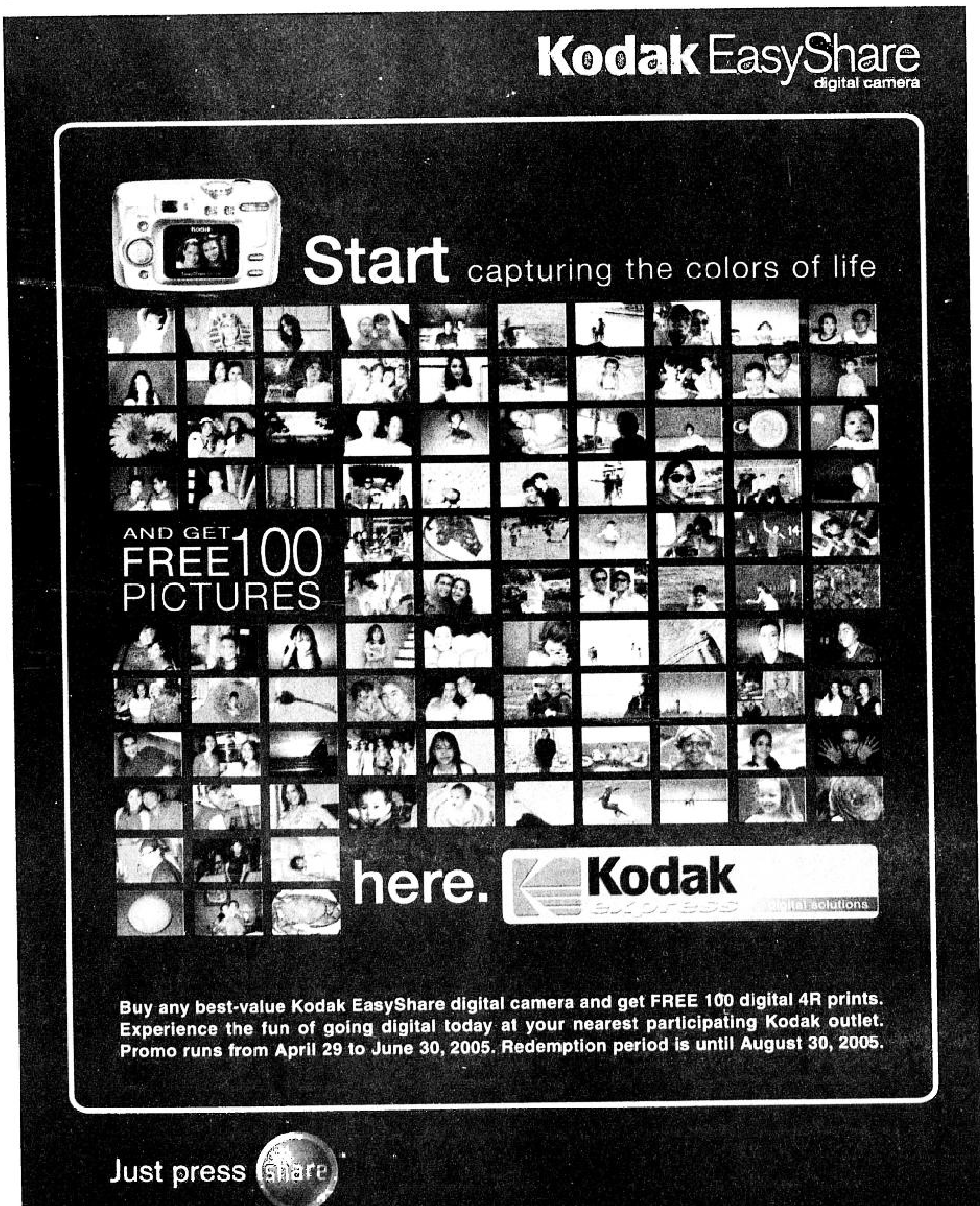
Some wags even went to the extent of asking him about **Cyndi Lauper**. "I just met her once. Why should I know anything about her?" was his curt reply to the girl who just wanted to have fun.

Score: "Love is Love."

The best question of the evening came from **Leah Puyat** who asked, with child-like curiosity, "What is your skincare secret?"

With a laugh, Boy George proudly answered, "It's happiness."

BALD MEETS BLONDE. Boy George and Yaparazzi



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